

GEORGINA.

VOL. III.

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GEORGINA

VOL II

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GEORGINA:

OR,

MEMOIRS

OF THE

BELLMOUR FAMILY.

BY A YOUNG LADY.

VOLUME III.

LONDON:

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OR

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BY A LONDON LADY.

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Printed by J. JOHNSON, in Pall-mall.

GEORGINA.

LETTER XIX.

THE Dowager's family did not return to London for the winter, until after Christmas;—in the course of which, although I did not appear in public, yet I had permission to attend all parties at home:—and on those occasions was compelled to listen to the ridiculous adulation of every fluttering fop, who for a moment stood within the attention of my ear:—at first addresses of this nature produced a particular amazement, to hear of my be-

ing the possessor of such numberless angelic charms and perfections, of which I was totally unconscious; but soon, every shadow of vanity encouraged in my youthful heart by such extravagancies, was perfectly eradicated, when I overheard the very man, who, the instant before, had been professing the most violent admiration for my beauty, virtues, and accomplishments, with all the energy of the sincerest passion, acquitting himself exactly in the same form of words, and with the same fervour of attachment, to the next female he approached.—Such hypocrisy disgusted me exceedingly, and produced my avoiding, as much as possible, all opportunities for these fashionable light coxcombs to display on me the force of that eloquence, which by repeated practice they could run over, even
without

without the loss of a single interjection.

Communicating my observations on this subject to my sister Emma and Miss Southern, and my determination in consequence of it, they were highly diverted at my simplicity;—assuring me, that when I became better acquainted with the world and mankind, I should rather receive amusement, in what at present appeared disgusting: Experience I soon perceived had established their opinion, it not being long before I was enabled, by pursuing their advice, to listen, without pain or pleasure, to the professions of these pretenders to common sense; playing them off with such vivacity and address, that often have I enjoyed the inexpressible pleasure, of seeing one of them stand in confusion for some mo-

ments, after having exhausted his whole set of uniform compliments, and then retire with an unmeaning grin, saying,—“ Ah! Miss Georgina, you are too severe.”

Amongst the foremost in this class of admirers, did I rank Lord Stanmore,—a young nobleman of distinguished fortune : but how great was my surprize, when in the ensuing spring, the Dowager Lady Avondale informed me, that his Lordship had solicited her permission to address me : a conquest of such importance, it might be supposed would have intoxicated my youthful mind, with every idea which vanity could inspire ; but my sensations on the occasion were far otherwise, not having entertained the smallest partiality in his Lordship's favour :—No, I was rather prejudiced
against

against him, in consequence of his trifling mode of addressing me, before this declaration to the Dowager; and indeed to such effect, that I was at once convinced of the impossibility of ever bringing myself to bestow my heart on him, even should the importunities of friends induce me to resign my hand.

Being highly alarmed lest the latter might be attempted, instead of making the smallest reply to the Dowager's information, I burst into a flood of tears, at which she was exceedingly surprized; but after enumerating all the advantages to be expected from an alliance with Lord Stanmore, declared, "That no violence should be offered to my inclinations, being well convinced of the impossibility of enjoying felicity in a married state, where

B 3

affection,

affection, or at least esteem, did not go hand in hand with interested motives:—Assuring me, “that her only view for wishing this connection, was an earnest desire to see me advantageously and happily fixed in life, which she had every reason to suppose would be the case, from the high opinion she entertained of Lord Stanmore’s merit, notwithstanding the aversion I had conceived against him, from circumstances, which if maturely considered, ought probably to bear but little weight:—Divest yourself, Georgina,” concluded her Ladyship, “of every prejudice, and if your heart is disengaged, attend more particularly, than perhaps you hitherto have done, to his Lordship’s disposition and address, and there will be but little doubt of your regarding him in a different point of view, from what at present

present is I perceive the case; oblige me with this attempt, in which, if my expectations are not answered, rest satisfied, that you shall never more be troubled with a mention of his Lordship's passion."

I promised a compliance to her wish; and although I exerted every power to bring my stubborn heart into an acquiescence with what, I plainly perceived, was the ardent hope, not only of her Ladyship, but all my other friends, yet I found it at the expiration of three months, to be a point so entirely incompatible with every scheme of real happiness, I informed the Dowager, that my heart and inclinations, in respect to Lord Stanmore, were still the same;—when she took the first opportunity of informing his Lordship, how fruitless it would be

in him, longer to persist in the most distant hope of succeeding in the manner, she sincerely wished had happened; he with great reluctance consented to this severe decree, when I was freed from the unpleasing importunities of a man, on whose account I had suffered great inquietude, and had shed many tears, from an apprehension of the interference of my friends, in support of his pretensions.

Soon after the disposal of a matter, in whose consequences I was so materially interested, my sister Louisa quitted Camden-house, to have her scheme of education completed under the immediate eye of the incomparable Dowager, who in every sense had acted the part of a most affectionate and tender mother to us all; and who received an assurance, by the

the distress which her removal produced amongst her companions, that the temper and disposition of this sweet girl were not in the least inferior, to what on a similar occasion, her two sisters and Miss Southern had proved theirs to be.

As the summer approached, we were making preparations to spend it at Myrtle-Grove in Yorkshire, when the Dowager received a letter from my Father, with one inclosed in it from my aunt Flyn, requesting, "as his Daughters were growing up, and would, in all probability, soon be married, that she might, whilst they continued under his protection, be indulged with the company of one or more of her beloved Caroline's children, at her humble habitation;"—assuring him, "that he and the

Dowager Lady Avondale might depend upon her taking such care of them, as they were entitled to expect from a relation, who bore so unbounded an affection to their much lamented mother, as she ever did."

In this request my Father was desirous to oblige my Aunt, by saying in his letter to the Dowager,—“that as Mrs. Flyn had always shewn the greatest love and affection for his adorable Caroline, he wished to gratify her in every point within his power; therefore, if her Ladyship did not think a visit for two or three months to Ireland, would be prejudicial to their education, he should wish to have one of his girls sent to Mrs. Flyn.”

No

No sooner did the Dowager receive these letters, than she determined on Louisa being sent to Ireland; as her youth would give sufficient time to co-operate with the quickness of her genius, in polishing away whatever rust her manners might acquire by a visit to her Aunt.

This determination at first gave great uneasiness to poor Louisa, as it at once overturned all the pleasing prospect she had indulged, of spending a most happy summer with her particular friends in Yorkshire, and threw her among a set of strangers (though relations) whose manners, she well knew from report, were totally unlike those she had always been accustomed to:—but on consideration of it's being my Father's wish for one of us to go, she soon with infinite good

Humour reconciled herself to the idea, of being the properest one to pay the visit.

About this time Lady Leixlip (a near relation of Lord Broomsgrove) was upon the point of returning to Ireland, where she generally resided, and with great politeness requested to have the care of Louisa as far as Dublin, which offer the Dowager readily embraced; and as Lord Ogleby, brother to Lady Leixlip, with Dr. Howard his tutor, purposed being of the party to that kingdom, the journey promised to be a most agreeable one, as his Lordship was of a very lively pleasing disposition, and remarkable for an engaging, respectful attention to our sex.

My

My Aunt Flyn being informed on what day my sister would probably arrive in Dublin, and directed to have a proper person there to conduct her down to the place of her residence in the country, poor Louisa with a heavy heart bid adieu for a few months to her friends in London.

her continuance
compulsive visit to our Aunt I am
enabled to lay before my dear Mrs.
Montague the greatest part of the
letters sent to me from thence by that
lively girl, which I am charmed, will
afford you some entertainment as well
as the novelty of the incidents con-
tained in them, as from the unreserved
manner in which they are written.

To Miss Georgina Bellmour.

Dublin, June 4, 1782.
ALAS! the ransomed!—from the
scourge of all that's gay and fashion-
able—

LETTER XX.

LOUISA having singled me out for a constant correspondent during her continuance in Ireland, on this compulsive visit to our Aunt, I am enabled to lay before my dear Mrs. Montague the greatest part of the letters sent to me from thence, by that lively girl, which, I am satisfied, will afford you some entertainment, as well from the novelty of the incidents contained in them, as from the unreserved manner in which they are written.

“ To Miss Georgina Bellmour.

Dublin, June 4, 1782.

ALAS! the transition!—from the centre of all that’s gay and fashionable—

able—from the arms of my partial friends—to a kingdom of savages and wild people.

“ Thanks to my stars, I have not rang’d about
The wilds of life, ere I could find a friend ;
Nature first pointed out *Georgina* to me,
And early taught me, by her secret force,
To love thy person, ere I knew thy merit,
Till what was instinct, grew up into friendship.

ADDISON.”

Is not that sublime, *Georgina*?—the thoughts of what I am shortly to encounter makes me sad, and sadness, to look graceful, must be poetical. My heart is full and would surely break, had I not you to make my lamentations to ;—not a mile but appeared fifty, that bore me from London. A pilgrimage to Jerusalem would have been to me equally as supportable, as my journey into Wales.

I yester-

I yesterday with my companions, who exerted themselves to render every thing agreeable throughout the journey, sailed from Holy-head, and auspicious gales in nine hours wafted us over to the country of my dear Georgina's nativity; yet without meaning to offend you child, in the smallest degree, I most sincerely wish I was now on my road to Myrtle-Grove.

When I went on board the King's yacht, which conveyed us to this kingdom, I was most agreeably surprised, to find our accommodations totally unlike in every respect, from those I very well remember in the ship which brought you and me from America. The day was uncommonly clear and fine, and though the wind was rather brisk, nothing could be more delightful than our voyage:—

but

but oh Georgina ! how was I astonished, when we entered the bay of Dublin, which I often indeed had heard, was only surpassed by that of Naples !—yet my imagination could not picture out any thing so enchantingly beautiful !—presumptuous, Louisa, restrain thy pen !—Only think of my vanity, Georgina, in going to attempt a description of it. But since I have made it a question, I find myself inclined to go on.

“ In spite of all the virtue we can boast,

“ The woman that deliberates is lost.”

Andison.

As you enter the harbour, a chain of lofty mountains, forming a kind of crescent, terminates the view, while the gently sloping hills and fertile valley beneath are covered with innumerable

merable villages, elegant villas, rich plantations, and luxuriant gardens :— at the foot of the vale the metropolis appears in a bright perspective, every moment enlarging to the sight, with the river Liffy rolling its tranquil stream quite through the city, whose entrance from the bay is covered with numberless ships, from various nations.

Very concise and pretty !—is it not Georgina?—I begin to think, that even you could not have done it more elegantly ;—but that is not to be wondered at, since I excel in all my undertakings. You see, Georgina, I have not altered the style of my conversation, and that I write just as I used to talk to you, without thought or form.

Whilst

Whilst I was lost in admiration of the charming scene before me, the ship came to anchor, and a boat took us to shore; but oh, my sister! what was my amazement!—when from a contemplation of one of the grandest prospects my eyes ever beheld, I landed at a place, the mean and filthy appearance of which instantly destroyed the idea I had formed of the metropolis of Ireland: here there was such a noise and tumult, that I began to conceive, I had actually got among the *wild Irish*; and my first thought was, to look flyly for their *wings*;—however, we did not long remain upon this frightful spot, as Lord Leixlip's coach was waiting for us, and before I arrived at his Lordship's house in Merrion-square, I had reason to reassume my former high opinion of Dublin.

My

My Lord received Lady Leixlip and her brother, with pleasure sparkling in his eyes, and Dr. Howard and Louisa, with every mark of politeness and hospitality.

This morning I have wrote to my Aunt, informing her that I am in Dublin, so that I shall soon expect a country *savage*, to convoy poor Louisa to Coolcliffe:—I sincerely wish it may be a *tame* one, for if it should look *wild*, I shall certainly be so terrified, that the consequences may prove fatal:

My courteous host and hostess are to conduct me to view all the stately edifices and public spectacles abounding in this metropolis; and are so kind to say, “they hope Mrs. Flyn will not be in a hurry to deprive them
of

of the pleasure of my company."—
And so hope I.

Give my affectionate love to the
Dowager, Lady Hunter, Juliana and
Emma, and tell them, that when any
thing grand or clever offers in my
Irish expedition, I will honour one of
them with a descriptive epistle;—but
all my follies and nonsense shall posi-
tively fall to the lot of Georgina.

"For thou wilt pardon 'em, because they're mine."

OTWAY.

Adieu.

LOUISA-SOPHIA BELLMOUR."

"To

“ To Miss Georgina Bellmour.

Coolcliffe, June 14, 1782.

Here am I Georgina; and surely no damsel in romance ever encountered more difficulties, or atchieved more adventures, in flying from the power of a wicked enchanter, than I have experienced in my way to this mansion of living curiosities.

My trusty squire and I—but stop, that will never do,—No.—I must lay a full and authentic account of all my exploits before you.—Hold, what have I here?—

—A fragment.—

Whilst the Lady Louisa was engaged with her music in the apartment of the Lady Leixlip, one of the serving men belonging to the Castle announced

nounced to her the arrival of her Squire: the Lady Louisa arising from her harpsichord, followed the man, who conducted her to the state apartment, where some of the nobles of the kingdom were assembled:—they arose to receive her.

The Lady Louisa conceived within herself, that her Squire could not have been introduced into the presence of the nobles, but was waiting her pleasure in one of the lower rooms; yet wishing to return the respect which had been shewn her, with mien erect and majestic step, she entered the room, and making her graceful obeisance around, she moved towards a seat, when her tall and uncouth Squire sprang from behind the folding doors, and stalked after her.

A squire

A Squire of old would have dropped upon his knee before the peerless Lady, and in the most fervent and humble strains, have implored as a boon (greater to him than life) the high and mighty honour of kissing the hand of her refulgent beauty.

But oh! with wild dismay, the shades of Knights and Squires of yore hover near me, whilst I relate the degeneracy of the once renowned and noble order of chivalry.

This simple or audacious Groom threw his daring arms around the peerless Lady's neck, and imprinted a kiss upon her disdainful cheek, that made the castle of the Earl resound.

Petrified with horror and confusion, the Lady Louisa stood amidst the nobles,

bles, till the young heir of Ogleby approached, and led her to a seat.

I found this fragment in my brain: there was more of it in the same place, but so imperfect, that it was altogether unintelligible. I wish from my heart that I could have made it out, and thereby have saved myself a wonderful deal of trouble.

It certainly was my story, which some good-natured Sylph or Geni was compiling, when by an unlucky toss of my head, I put him and his ideas to flight, and in the hurry of escape, he doubtless dropped the leaf I stumbled on.—I must therefore proceed in my own way, as well as I can.

When I was seated, Lord Ogleby could not resist joining me in the most

immoderate laughter, at the unexpected embrace I had received from honest Owen Flyn, who was, poor fellow ! destined by his mischievous stars, to furnish a still greater share of entertainment to the circle there assembled,—for stooping after the barbarous kiss, to take up his hat and whip, which he had thrown on the ground, least the incumbrance of them should impede his affectionate attack upon his astonished cousin, he, by some awkward turn, entangled the lash of the latter with his spurs, when down he tumbled backward, sprawling on the floor ; and so great was his agitation, that he made several unsuccessful plunges with his feet, before he could disengage himself from his embarrassment ; however he at length succeeded, with the assistance of Lord Leixlip, and contrived, without any further

further display of his unpolished manners, to place himself on a chair, where he sat twirling his hat with the most dextrous rapidity, now and then saying in a low voice,—“ Edad ! it was like a Christmas tofs.”

Could malice have invented a more humiliating situation for me,—in a room full of strangers of the first rank in the kingdom, who it is more than probable may never have an opportunity of knowing, how Miss Louisa-Sophia Bellmour came connected with such a rustic : it is wonderful I did not blush to death. However, soon after Owen’s exploit, the company took leave ; no doubt to give free scope to a risibility, which their politeness obliged them to suppress, whilst in my presence.

When the visitors were gone, and with them a momentary fit of spleen, which Pride threw over me, I was able to attend to my loving Cousin's dress, which was, I assure you, perfectly adapted to the wearer.

His outer garment was a thick dark brown cloth (called, in Ireland, *frize*) with yellow metal buttons, and the skirts turned back, by the assistance of two large pins: his waistcoat was a flaming scarlet rug, double-breasted (cool, as his coat, for the month of June) and ornamented with two rows of white buttons; his boots strong and clumsy, tied round his knees with large bunches of green ribband; a black silk handkerchief round his neck; his hair short and inclining to curl; and a round hat, adorned with numberless small steel buckles to the band, in
which

which were stuck several pieces of paper, received (as I was afterwards informed) at the different turnpikes he passed through, on his way from Coolcliffe.

Oh my Coz!—surely never were there more pains taken to disfigure any mortal, than what thou tookest, when thou prepared thyself to pay thy devoirs at Merriion-square!

Having thoroughly surveyed the habiliment of my Squire, I recollected, that I had totally forgot to make the least inquiry for my Aunt or her family; so calling forth some good-natured smiles, I began to address my accomplished Coz, on several matters relative to my Coolcliffe friends.

My affability operating like a refrigerant shower upon a tender flowret, fading and losing its aromatic power, under the scorching influence of a dog-day sun, poor Owen revived, raised his drooping head, and with great modesty answered all my questions ; as he did some proposed to him by Lord and Lady Leixlip, and Lord Ogleby, in a manner which proved him to be a more intelligent being, than his external appearance gave reason to suppose.

Lord Leixlip, with great politeness, requested Owen's company to dinner that day ; when, to my inexpressible satisfaction, he declined ; saying, " He had left his horses at a stable in Smithfield, and that his Father would be very angry, if he did not look after them himself, as the Dublin ostlers were not

to be trusted."—Then turning to me, he continued, "I hope, Cousin Louisa, that it will be convenient to you to leave town the day after to-morrow, by six o'clock in the morning, as my Father desired we might positively set off on that day?"

Lady Leixlip, after expressing a great degree of concern, at being so soon to be deprived of the pleasure of my agreeable company, demanded of the artless Owen, in what manner I was to travel?—to which he replied, "*My Lady*, I have brought up our one-horse chair, for my Cousin, Mrs. Fanny, and their clothes; and because it has been in constant use these seven years, and is not to be sure very handsome, my sister Flora has sent up her own poney, saddle, and bridle (which my Uncle Valentine gave her, as she is his god-

daughter) for my Cousin to ride down on, if she should be ashamed to go in the old *noddy* :—but if she chooses to go in it, Dennis, the shepherd's son (a very honest, sober lad, who came up with me), is to ride the mare I came to town on, and to lead the chair horse, as my Cousin and Mrs. Fanny are neither of them I suppose much used to driving, and I am to return on Flora's *Sprightly*."

Her Ladyship shook her head and smiled, whilst I could not suppress a fit of laughter, at the idea of being conveyed in so elegant and convenient a style, almost through the kingdom.

Lord Leixlip, after taking two or three turns across the room, with a countenance expressive of some dissatisfaction at my intended equipage, whispered Lady Leixlip; and then turning

to

to my Squire, said, " If you will favour me with your company, Mr. Flyn, at breakfast the day after tomorrow, at eight o'clock, I hope we shall be able to contrive a more comfortable way for Miss Bellmour's travelling to your Father's, than that you propose." My ungainly Cousin looking at his Lordship with an inquisitive stare, promised to attend ; and, making a thousand scrapes, took leave.

No sooner was Owen gone, than Lady Leixlip apologized for the embarrassment occasioned by the blunder of the footman, who had introduced my charming Coz into the drawing-room, at so unfortunate a crisis ; assuring me, " She had that very morning given general orders, if any person of the name of Flyn should enquire for Miss Bellmour, they were to

be shewn into the library, where she intended I should receive my country visitors ; that she had taken the liberty of using this precaution, from the account I had given her of my Aunt's strange marriage, and from a supposition, that no part of such a connection would probably be adapted to a public view ; but that she at once perceived, from whence the disobedience of her commands arose, the servant whom she had given her directions to being a foreigner, and she had inadvertently spoken to him in English."

It is I think high time to put the finishing stroke to this unconscionable epistle, which I shall do, by affixing to it the name of

The ingenious

LOUISA-SOPHIA BELLMOUR."

" To

“ To Miss Georgina Bellmour.

Coolcliffe, June 16, 1782.

SO after a long pause, which I allowed for a display of white teeth and dimpled smiles, at the ludicrous exhibition our accomplished relation made, I again reassume the thread of my adventures.

Revolving in my mind—(don't be too much startled, my sober sister, though, I must confess, that thought entering into my mind savoured strongly of a miracle)—for some time, the words of Lord Leixlip's invitation to my pretty kinsman, for breakfasting in Merrion-square, the morning of my intended departure for Coolcliffe, I took the first opportunity of mentioning to his Lordship my apprehensions,

of his meaning to alter the mode proposed by my relations, for my travelling to the country ; being persuaded, that if such a thing should be attempted, it would draw upon poor Owen the anger of his Father, and be the means of Mr. Flyn's entertaining such an opinion of my pride, that my residence at his house would be rendered still more disagreeable, than I had every reason to suppose it would be.

“ It is most certainly my intention,” said his Lordship, “ to make some little alteration in your mode of travelling, my lively charge, and hope you will have no objection to a seat in my coach, in preference to the one-horse *chair*, or the good-natured *Flora's Sprightly* ; as Lady Leixlip and I have particular business within a few miles of Mr. Flyn's ; and I dare say, that

that Lord Ogleby and Dr. Howard will receive great satisfaction in accompanying us upon the excursion."

Instantly Lord Ogleby and Dr. Howard both exclaimed, "Oh, Lord Leixlip! how delightful will it be, to enjoy the enlivening company of Miss Louisa upon this journey; it will indeed be a real party of pleasure.—It is all fixed,—it must be so Miss Bellmour."

Every argument which I could offer, to dissuade them from this polite attention, proved ineffectual; as there seemed a combination among them all (in which Lady Leixlip most provokingly joined) that I must not figure away upon the good Valentine's gift, or jog in the serviceable one-horse *chair*:"—so that I was compelled to
give

give up the idea, and perform part of my journey as Mamma used to do.

The morning for our journey at length arrived, when the punctual Owen rapped at the door, whilst the clocks were striking eight; having paraded about the square, with his horses, Dennis, and the old *noddy*, at least an hour, that he might not exceed the time appointed by his Lordship.

Being ushered into the breakfast parlour, and having made some of his best scrapes to Lady Leixlip, &c. he thus addressed me; "By dad, Cousin Louisa, I like you a deal better in your habit, than in that *crincum crancum* gown you wore the other day."

Owen's simplicity produced a general smile; and Lady Leixlip said,
"Very

“Very well, Mr. Flyn, I see that Miss Louisa must be very attentive to her dress, while she remains in the country, as you are so great an observer of it.”—“By dad,” answered the gallant Owen, “I believe my Cousin would look well in any dress.”—A compliment, Georgina, I am convinced, more sincerely meant, than would probably have been the case, if repeated by some of those fops I have seen fluttering about you, Emma, and Juliana, in Portman-square.

Being all seated to breakfast, at which Owen was by no means an idle spectator, Lord Leixlip began to unfold the plan of our intended mode of operation, by saying, “I have been thinking Mr. Flyn, how fortunate it is, that Lady Leixlip and I have some business down to Castlebar, which I believe

believe is not far distant from your Father's; and that it will be much pleasanter for you and Miss Louisa to take seats in my coach so far, than to attempt so long a journey on horseback in such warm weather:—I know she prefers going as your Father proposed; but she is unacquainted with the fatigue she must be exposed to, in riding so far, or with the length of our Irish miles. I am certain, Mr. Flyn, you will acquiesce in my opinion, and therefore I would recommend your sending off the *chair* and poney immediately to Castlebar, under the care of Dennis, who you say may be safely entrusted; and one of my servants shall lead your mare, when you do not chuse to ride."

"Faith, my Lord," answered Owen, with a smile of evident satisfaction,

faction, "I am as glad as if I had got twenty pounds, that you are going to Castlebar, whether you have business there or not, as it is a long way to Coolcliffe, and if my Cousin is not much used to riding, she would find it a very fatiguing journey. I told my Father, it was no way for my Cousin Louisa to travel, and that he could readily borrow Mr. Lindsay's chaise, or twenty others, to bring her down, but he would not be put out of his way. If I had a golden carriage of my own, or if it had been left to me to manage her journey, the D—I a bit of the old chair should ever have entered the city of Dublin.—Dennis is indeed an honest, sober lad, and will take good care of every thing committed to his trust."

Finishing

Finishing his well meant oration with a spring, which overturned the chair he sat upon, and nearly the table with all the breakfast apparatus on it, he flew out of the room ; and staying about ten minutes, returned in an ecstasy of pleasure, exclaiming, “ Well, Cousin Louisa, you must now, whether you like it or not, go in my Lord’s coach, for Dennis is gone off with the old *noddy* ; joy be with it ; I wish I had never brought it to town.”

As this journey was undertaken by Lord and Lady Leixlip, merely for my accommodation, it gave me, I assure you, Georgina, a great degree of uneasiness ; but as they both seemed unhappy whenever I mentioned a circumstance to that effect, I was obliged totally to drop the subject :—So away we drove about twelve o’clock, Lord
and

and Lady Leixlip, Owen and Miss Louisa leading in a coach and six; Lord Ogleby and Dr. Howard following in a phaeton and four; Fanny and her Ladyship's woman in a chaise and four; with six servants on horseback bringing up the rear, and leading Owen's mare by turns.

Our Cousin made several attempts to be excused from going in the coach, but without effect, as Lord Leixlip would not hear of it, having taken a wonderful fancy to him, on account of his genuine simplicity, and the apparent integrity of his heart.

For about five miles we proceeded most pleasantly, Owen affording a fund of entertainment, by his shrewd but artless remarks—When, oh, my sister! to prove the vicissitude of human bliss;

or

or who can be certain, that the next moment will not bring calamity with it!—Alas, poor Owen! dreadful to relate!—he had never before been in a carriage of the kind;—riding backwards disagreed with his frame;—his head became giddy;—he wished to get into the air, to prevent himself from fainting, yet had not power to announce his situation; he grew worse, and not observing that the glass next to him was drawn up, he, in his hurry to escape, thrust his head quite through it, and slightly cut his forehead.

Although I was certainly much concerned at the accident, yet I could not refrain from the most immoderate laughter, at the ridiculous figure which my unfortunate kinsman made, with his head peeping through the glass; nor was it without some difficulty, that

Lady

Lady Leixlip could keep her countenance in serious order, notwithstanding her calling me, "Wicked girl;" and wondering how I could laugh at Mr. Flyn's distress.

Lord Leixlip—with shame I own it—gave more evident proof of his good-nature towards the bleeding Squire, than either her Ladyship or me, for having stopt the coach, he assisted the servants in extricating his head from amidst the broken glass (where it was jammed as if in a pillory) and binding up his wounds; which humane office being performed, Coz was handed up into the phaeton (being too ill to venture in his former station or to ride) and Lord Ogleby took his place in the coach.

The

The weather proving remarkably warm, and Lord Leixlip's horses being obliged to perform the entire journey (as there was no accommodation for hiring any at every stage, as is the case in England) we were four days upon the road to Castlebar; which however passed away most pleasantly, as we by turns changed from the coach to the phaeton; and there seemed amongst us all a strong disposition to be cheerful and happy; in which we were not a little assisted by honest bumpkin, who now and then ventured into the coach, exhibiting a most perfect picture of rustic nature, in all his words and actions, yet tempered with the highest modesty and respect.

In about two hours after we drove into Castlebar, I was informed by Owen, that *Dennis Brennan* was just arrived,

arrived, with my splendid equipage, all safe and sound.

My ideas were so employed during the greatest part of the night, by the novelty I was to encounter on the following day, that I slept but little; and arose some time before any of my fellow travellers, except the wounded Owen, whose forehead still remained bound up with a handkerchief, and with whom and Fanny, I rambled all over the town of Castlebar, and into the beautiful domain of Lord L—n, which is situated near it.

During this perambulation, I perceived that Owen was quite at home, and possessed the regard of every person he met; all inquiring most affectionately, how he came by the accident on his head; for which he assigned
number-

numberless causes, telling one, "That he had been wounded in a duel:"—another, "In a rencounter with a highwayman near Athlone, whom he afterwards killed:"—to a third, "That his skull was fractured by a press-gang:"—then, "He was kicked by a mad cow:"—again, "He fell out of a window, two stories high, in his sleep:"—With many other inventions equally probable, which seemed to be received with the most implicit belief, and obtained for him a general compassion from his good-natured, credulous friends.

These ideal accidents, related with a serious, feeling countenance, did not fail to throw me into such immoderate fits of laughter, as drew the attention of the junior part of the inhabitants upon us; in consequence of which,
and

and his frequent exertions to crack his whip, we had the satisfaction, before our arrival at the inn, of having all the dogs and children of the town at our heels, barking and screaming at a most unmerciful rate. Our popularity afforded no small degree of amusement to Lord and Lady Leixlip, who were drawn to the window by the noise of our retinue, as was Lord Ogleby, who seemed quite vexed at not having been of the party, in this ridiculous excursion of the morning.

Soon after breakfast, I took leave of my charming friends, whose politeness and attention have made an everlasting impression on my mind: they expressed the greatest concern at parting with me; and Lady Leixlip said, "that she hoped to have the pleasure of my

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company for some time, before I returned to the Dowager Lady Avondale, who, she was satisfied, would have no objection to indulge her in so great a happiness;" concluding with an assurance, "that if I would be so good to inform her, when I was ready to leave Coolcliffe, a carriage should be sent to convey me, either to Dublin, or to Lord Leixlip's seat near Drogheda."

Lord Ogleby likewise regretted very much the breaking up so soon our lively party, adding many compliments upon the occasion, which doubtless proceeded from his unbounded good-nature, and a degree of compassion for the unpleasant situation I was likely to be in, whilst on my visit to my Aunt.

My

My friends now departed for Dublin; when mounting my palfrey, Owen his Rozinante, and Fanny ascending her triumphal chariot, with my lute in charge, and accompanied by honest *Dennis*, we proceeded with great success, until a trifling hill, at about two miles distance from Castlebar, unfortunately presented itself; which proving disagreeable to the chair-horse, he took it into his head to stop short, nor could all the persuasive arguments, or ungentle treatment bestowed on him by *Dennis* in the least avail, being resolutely stubborn in his intention not to climb the hill.

Owen losing his patience, dismounted from his horse, to give all the assistance in his power to poor *Dennis*, but without effect, the animal still continued inexorable, and now and then,

by way of amusement, plunging and lashing at the chair.

At length becoming alarmed for Fanny, I desired her to alight, which she readily complied with, bearing the lute in her arms; when Owen dispatched the trusty *Dennis* across the fields, to call some rustics to our aid, whom we saw at work a little distance from the road. He returned with four, whose exertions soon compelled the sullen gentleman to draw the carriage up the hill; which having accomplished, Owen and one of the peasants returned for Fanny and the lute, but I was too much interested in the welfare of both, to allow either to venture again in the ill-omened vehicle.

As

At this Owen appeared quite disconcerted, but pausing for a moment, he exclaimed, " By dad, Cousin, I have hit it !—more grief to that *rusty* brute.—But don't you fret Mrs. Fanny, you shall ride behind me."—When sending one of the men to a cottage near us for some straw, and it being readily given, he, with the assistance of *Dennis*, twisted it into two thick ropes.

With amazement I awaited the event of this uncommon preparation, when Owen mounted his horse, and Fanny being placed behind him, he tied her fast to a belt he had buckled round his waist, with one of the ropes of straw ; and fixing the lute before him on the horse's neck, he fastened it also to his belt, with another of his curious ropes : and now perceiving

that his baggage was immoveably fixed, he gave himself most wonderful applause for his ingenuity, and set off in a gentle trot up the hill, whilst I slowly followed, scarcely able to sit my horse, so violently was my risibility excited, by the ridiculous appearance which poor Fanny made, bound to the back of my booby Cousin.

When we got up to the chair, I offered some money to the peasants, for their trouble, but to my utter astonishment, they rejected my liberality, with an air of ingenuous pride, saying, "They were ever proud to serve *Master Owen*."—So bidding them a good-day, we set forward, leaving *Dennis* to come on at his leisure with the restiff horse and chair.

Being

Being arrived within a mile of our destination, Owen at once slackened his pace into a walk, saying, "By dad! we must now go gently, to cool old *Bess* and *Sprightly*, or my Father will swear at us like fury."

As we jogged along, I amused myself by surveying the country round us, when on a small hill at no great distance, I perceived a number of men, women, and children, springing and dancing about, with every appearance of mirth and pleasure: Owen observing them at the same instant, exclaimed, "I'll be hanged, if our *gawkeys* are not out on yonder hill to wait our coming."

Scarcely had he finished this remark, when the multitude began to move most rapidly down the hill, and

in a few minutes we were surrounded by at least an hundred persons, some of whom were perfectly clothed, and others not :—their joy appeared unbounded and extravagant, exclaiming incessantly, “ Welcome, Cousin Louisa !—Welcome, Miss Caroline’s daughter !—Oh ! the sweet creature !”

Astonished at such a strange collection of figures, and almost supposing them, by their wild exertions, to have broke loose from Bethlem, I demanded of Owen, “ Who these antics were, and what they wanted from us ?” —to which he, with great coolness, replied, “ That some of them were his Brothers and Sisters ; others, servants from Coolcliffe ; and the rest, poor tenants from the lands of Silverspring, who were assembled to bid me welcome.”

Upon

Upon receiving this information, I requested of him to hold my horse's bridle, whilst I alighted to embrace my Cousins, and pay my compliments to them;—"Why then in troth, my *dear honey*,"—answered the waggish Owen, "it is a thousand pities, that you do not dismount above a quarter of a mile from the house, in order to compliment these *stags* :—Mary come up indeed!—No, no, if they must be complimented, they shall have a smart run for it."—When claping spurs to old *Bess*, the good dame set out at full speed, and *Sprightly*, not chusing to be outdone, kept close at her heels; nor could all my powers stop him, until I found myself in the middle of Cool-cliffe farm-yard, where Mr. Flyn was standing; and, who without taking the smallest notice of my Ladyship, began to pour forth a volley of curses

upon his unfortunate son, for riding the poor dumb beasts to death. To all which Owen demurely answered,—“ Don’t blame me, Sir ; go scold that mad-brained gang that met us a quarter of a mile from hence : we were riding slow enough I am sure, till they with their brawling and pranks frightened this stubborn brute : my arms are almost torn from my body endeavouring to pull her in ; but it was all to no purpose, for stop or stay she would not, until she got into the yard ;—so here she is and be whipt to her.”

The tempestuous emotions of Mr. Flyn’s breast becoming a little calm, he advanced to pay his compliments to the neglected Louisa, when espying the bloody handkerchief round poor Owen’s head, he stopped and exclaimed,

ed, "Fine doings, you stupid block-head ! I suppose you have been rioting in Dublin, instead of minding the *cattle* ?"—To this heavy charge he of course pleaded not guilty ; and in his defence related his rencounter with the coach window, when the circumstance of the glass being fractured, exhausting the whole stock of my dear, placid Uncle's patience, he ranted like a madman about the yard, repeating a volume of curses extempore, and saying as articulately as his passion would allow him, "A pretty job truly ;—out upon you for a booby :—I dare say all the money I gave you for the journey was little enough to repair the damage, unless you had the ingenuity to get it pieced."

"Pray, Father," returned my good tempered Coz, "Don't hurry your-

self so much, for as my Lord saw that it was entirely an accident, which might have befallen the wisest man in the kingdom, had he been so sick as I was, he did not even ask me to pay one farthing damages, but only laughed at it, as if it had been nothing :—and you may be sure I did not say one word of paying, when I found my Lord took it so quietly.”

Mr. Flyn now finding, that no expence was incurred by this horrific adventure, at once became a smiling, reasonable creature, and was beginning to address me, who, during his fit of insanity, sat patiently (though not devoid of terror) on my horse, waiting the return of a lucid interval ; but before he had time to pay his devoirs, the frantic croud arrived, and my polished Cousin Valentine, regardless of his

his Father's oration to me, took me in his arms, and bore me from my Uncle's civilities, and the welcome of the multitude, into the dining-parlour, where he placed me in an elbow chair; rewarding himself for so much trouble with a kiss, whose echo almost shook the foundation of the farm-house from its base.

My Aunt, being now apprised of my arrival, ran to me in the most affectionate manner; and throwing her arms around my neck, dissolved into a flood of tears, exclaiming, "It is my Caroline herself! my darling Sister!"—and continued to gaze on me for some minutes, with infinite delight, though evidently with a feeling also of the most poignant affliction, at the recollection of that beloved object, which
my

my features brought so strongly to her remembrance.

Wild and thoughtless as I am, Georgina, you know my heart is ever susceptible of the tenderest emotions, and I could not refrain from mingling my tears with those of my distressed Aunt.

This pathetic or whimpering scene being ended, one of a very different, but of a most disagreeable nature succeeded:—for, would you believe, Georgina, I was under the cruel necessity, without murmuring, and almost without permission to draw my breath, to undergo the dreadful operation of being kissed and beslobbered by seven of my awkward Cousins;—nay, what was more provoking than all

all the rest, I was compelled to receive a most sonorous salute from my charming Uncle, who had by this time recovered so much of his good-humour, as enabled him to confer so great an honour on me.

Oh! Georgina, it is a barbarous custom; and the only consolation I enjoyed, was, that I hoped you and all my friends at Myrtle-Grove would feel a sympathetic pity for poor Louisa, when you heard of the sufferings of her lips, upon that dreadful occasion.

Soon as I had a little recovered from this consternation — but hold, I am summoned to dinner. —

———“ Adieu.

———Farewell.

“ For hark ! I hear the toll of the bell.”

GAY.

LOUISA-SOPHIA BELLMOUR.”

“ To

“ To Miss Georgina Bellmour.

Coolcliffe, June 22, 1782.

WHERE did I leave off?—Oh! at my recovery.—Soon as I had a little recovered from the consternation this unexpected attack of affection had thrown me into, I went into the farm-yard, to thank the poor tenants from Silverpring, for their good-nature: they seemed delighted with my condescension, as they called it; enquiring for my *Dada* and Master Henry, and many of them saying, “ That Captain Bellmour was the finest, handsomest gentleman they ever saw, when he took Miss Caroline, their sweet young Lady and kind Benefactress, from them.”

The

The recollection of her, I observed, brought tears from many of their eyes, which affected me very much; and strongly impressed me with a high idea of the generous and exalted feelings of these poor peasants, who respectfully retired, saying to each other, " This child is the exact *moral* of that saint Miss Caroline."

The arrival of such a great personage, as Louisa Bellmour, could not you know long remain a secret in the country; no wonder then, that the very next day after my arrival, and for several succeeding ones, all ranks and degrees of the neighbouring inhabitants crowded to pay their compliments to the daughter of our universally lamented mother; amongst whom were Henry's friends, Mr. and Mrs. Miller, and Mr. and Mrs. Lindsay of Silver-

Silverſpring, who all preſſed me exceedingly to ſpend ſome time with them, before I leave the country : but I very much fear, that I ſhall not be allowed to gratify one of them with my *delightful* ſociety, as our Aunt—provoking creature !—did not alas ! even ſmile aſſent.

As curioſity is ſaid to be a prevailing paſſion in the breaſt of every woman, perhaps you Miſs and Madam Emma may feel it's influence this moment, and ardently wiſh for an introduction to each individual of a family, to whom we are ſo nearly connected ; I can therefore now ſatisfy your deſires, having informed myſelf of the number of which it conſiſts, and in what manner they are diſpoſed of.

Imprimis,

Imprimis, Caroline the eldest daughter (whose education our dear Mamma attended to) has been some time happily married to a Mr. Montgomery, an eminent linen merchant in the north of Ireland.

In the next place, give me leave to introduce you to our cousin George, the eldest son (educated also under Mamma's directions) who is settled about four miles from hence, on a valuable farm; and was united six months ago, to a very pretty and accomplished young lady, with whom he got a tolerable fortune: I like them very much, and they are, I assure you, by no means a disgrace to our family.

After these follow four sons and five daughters, whose education has been
but

but little attended to; notwithstanding which, I receive a great degree of pleasure in their society, as they discover in their manners a simplicity that is wonderfully engaging; particularly the girls, who are all extremely pretty, except Florinda, who must, I assure you, Madam, be styled beautiful;—she is in her seventeenth year; has a pleasing voice; plays well on the guitar; is very lively and my favourite.

In Arabella (who is one year younger) I find an inexhaustible fund of entertainment; for having spent about three weeks in Dublin with Mrs. Montgomery, when she saw five or six plays, she has ever since remained so much under the influence of Melpomene, that having instructed her fourth brother, Augustus, in the parts
of

of *Jaffier*, *Lord Hastings*, and *Romeo*, she every moon-light night takes her station at one of the chamber windows, from whence calling upon *Romeo*, *Augustus* immediately appears, when the tender dialogue is held, to the no small amusement of *Flora*, *Owen*, and myself, who generally compose the audience.—One line from *Shakespeare* will at once set her a-going.—I have won her heart by promising to perform the part of *Juliet's* nurse; and she is now looking out for some half-starved lad to represent the apothecary.

My Aunt is delighted beyond measure, with her daughter's theatric powers, while Mr. *Flyn*, staring at her distraction in the character of *Belvidera*, threatens the poor girl with an apartment in *Swift's Hospital for Lunatics*.

Her

Her comic talents are, in my opinion, much the strongest, as she is a most incomparable mimic, and takes off her Father and all the singular characters in the neighbourhood to admiration ; but is not as yet able to hit me off to her own satisfaction, although she is indefatigable in attempting to catch my accent, and the playful glances of my eyes, in which she thinks her endeavours will be crowned with success, in the course of another week :—the former she may no doubt acquire ; but hem !—I flatter myself, Georgina, I shall convince her, that every artist must fall considerably short in an attempt to equal, by copy, the brilliancy of the sun.

Vanity in leading strings would be an excellent title for a little moral tale : if you should write one, Georgina, under

der that name, you will naturally—
from motives of friendship I mean—
dedicate it to me.

And now for Constantia (surnamed
by her brothers and sisters, the *Notable*)
whose pardon I solicit with all due sub-
mission, for having, through forgetful-
ness of the dignity inseparable from
eldership, given to Flora and Ara-
bella, a precedency to which they were
by no means entitled, as she takes a
rank superior to Florinda of five long
years; and on that account is my
Aunt's companion, superintends the
dairy, keeps the servants, her young
Brother and Sisters in order, with many
other necessary matters, which give
her such an appearance of *notability*,
that she is the constant toast of all the
farmers in the country:—she is cer-
tainly a shrewd pleasant girl, but too
good

good a housewife to stand very high in my opinion.

The Sunday after my arrival was indeed a day of finery, as my female Cousins left their beds at the morning's dawn, and throwing aside their simple attire, composed of white home-spun linen gowns, with coloured ribbands, (which they never vary throughout the year, except on Sundays and other holidays) stepped forth in all the glare of gaudy dress.—A change by no means advantageous to any of them I assure you.

About half an hour after seven, Flora came to my bed-side, and hastily opening the curtains, asked me, "How I liked her new gown; and if she was dressed in the fashion? when, oh Georgina! would you believe it?—forgetting
ing

ing for that moment all the lessons of politeness I have received, and every idea of the Graces, my risibility was so much roused by the grotesque figure which stood before me, that I laughed as loud and rudely, as any bumpkin in the kingdom; whilst poor Florinda waiting with a rueful countenance, until my convulsion had subsided, demanded with an artless air, and in a faltering tone of voice, "Whether her dress was the cause of my violent fit of laughter."—to which replying, "That it was," she in a mournful accent answered, "Then you dislike it Cousin."—"I do indeed, my dearest Flora," continued I, "and therefore you must give me leave to unload your head a little;"

—————“ For loveliness
Needs not the foreign aid of ornament,
But is when unadorn'd, adorn'd the most.”

THOMPSON.

This compliment obtaining her forgiveness for my rudeness, I arose, and calling Fanny to my assistance, we displayed a happy fancy in the alterations made upon her dress; when Flora soon reassuming her air of simplicity, became uncommonly lovely: her appearance however made me reflect with regret upon the sphere she was doomed to move in, and I could not resist, by a sudden impulse, repeating the following lines from Gray.

“ Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
The dark unfathom'd caves of Ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.”

Whilst

Whilst I was speaking, Arabella entered the room; she fixed her eyes upon me, and listened with the most profound attention, until I was silent, when running to me, she embraced me with the utmost cordiality, saying, " Indeed, my dear Cousin, you shall not play my old nurse; it would be a thousand pities :—No.—I must insist on your performing the part of *Jane Shore*, as Augustus is very great in *Lord Hastings*, and *Alicia* is my favourite character : Flora shall do *Dumont*; and we'll contrive to fill up the other parts, so as to be able to represent the play in the great parlour, where the large screen will make an admirable chamber scene; and we can borrow a few more in the neighbourhood."

Delighted with this idea, down she flew to breakfast, leaving me to equip
E 2 myself

myself for church; which task I soon performed (as I was to ride on *Sprightly*) and immediately followed to the parlour, accompanied by the newly modelled Flora; when my Aunt, who is pleased with every thing I do, highly admired my taste in the alteration of her daughter's dress: Miss Constantia however could by no means approve of the hat being curtailed of all it's ornamental flowers; but on my advising her to make a *beaupot* of them for the drawing-room, for the purpose of at once displaying them and her own ingenuity to great advantage, she appeared contented; and on the following day, with the assistance of some evergreens, actually ornamented the fire-place with the former decorations of her own and Flora's hats.

Breakfast

Breakfast being ended, my Aunt, Constantia, and Flora set off in the chair for church at Balinrobe, whilst Arabella, Owen, and myself followed on horseback, and the rest of the family on foot, took a short way across the fields.

The blessings poured forth upon me and all my family by the peasants, who almost lined the road through which we passed to Balinrobe, were innumerable : and when the service of the church was ended, I received many compliments from the genteel families who attended.

My Aunt having fixed on the following day, for beginning to return the visits which had been paid me, the chair was at the door by ten, when she and I, attended by Miss Flyn in all her

captivating airs, drove away to Silver-spring, Mr. Miller's, and several other places.

The politeness and hospitality, with which I was received by every family I called on, flattered me very much, being pressed exceedingly to spend some days with each, before my return to England; but that my Aunt declared to be impossible, as I shall not have time to gratify all who ask me; and was I to pay the compliment to two or three families only, it would offend the rest.

With the most respectful duty I thank my Aunt, for her kind consideration; but there are some of the families I have seen, with whom I will positively spend a few days, even should I be forced to walk to them; as I am
certain,

certain, that those I cannot oblige with so great a favour, will be too good-natured and considerate, to be offended with any thing, which a volatile, giddy girl of fourteen can do:—Owen has promised to have horses ready for me, whenever I wish to take a flight; adding, “That Father can only scold him for it; and that he will at any time hazard a scolding to oblige me.”

Indeed, Georgina, I am under infinite obligations to this poor young man, for his uncommon good-nature and respectful attention to me on every occasion: he has a generous, honest heart, and often laments his want of education, with a degree of sensibility, which very much affects me, and has determined me, never to cease my importunities to Papa, when he returns

to Europe, until he gets something done for this deserving creature.

I wish that my example would influence you, Miss Georgina, to add a few lines more to your letters, than generally is the case : or shall I take the hint from your concise mode of writing, and be less descriptive than I am ? —Do not provoke me, I advise you, as there is no doubt but I am a girl of spirit :—you will, however, probably at this juncture agree with me (if your patience allows you to get thus far) that it is high time to finish this epistle ; and therefore without waiting to pay the necessary compliments of Mr. and Mrs. Flyn, with their numerous progeny, in a proper style, to all their dear relations in England, I hastily say adieu.

LOUISA-SOPHIA BELLMOUR."

L E T.

L E T T E R XXI.

I WILL now, Mrs. Montague, for a little time, break the thread of my dear Louisa's correspondence, on purpose to inform you, that one day in the beginning of July, as the Dowager Lady Avondale and her family were sitting down to dinner, at Myrtle Grove, we were surprised by the unexpected entrance of Mr. Southwell, who had come from Broomsgrove Castle, to pay a visit to her Ladyship and friends. He obliged us with his company about ten days, during which he was attentive to all, but particular to none; and as a peace was then concluded with America, often wished it might be the means of Colonel Bell-

mour's speedy return to his native country. This being considered as an intended piece of politeness and good nature to the family, we as often thanked him for it.

Among several other subjects of conversation during this visit, Mr. Southwell informed us, " That he had spent the month of June with Lord and Lady Abberville, at Bright-helmstone, when he was extremely sorry to remark, that her Ladyship's conduct was such, as gave him too great reason to apprehend, that a total separation must soon take place between her and his Brother, who was so much altered in his manner and appearance, as to raise the surprise of all his friends."

This

This account of Lord Abberville produced a visible effect upon the tender-hearted Emma, who could not suppress a sigh of pity at the unhappy situation of a man, for whom she had entertained the most sincere regard, in spite of the ill treatment which she had experienced from him.

As soon as Mr. Southwell had taken his leave at Myrtle Grove, I informed Louisa of his visit, and will give you that mad girl's ideas on the occasion, in the first letter, which I afterwards received from her. I own they did not a little startle me, when I perceived, that by them she had disclosed a circumstance, which I flattered myself was a secret scarcely known to my own heart; having taken indefatigable pains to eradicate from my hitherto peaceful bosom, the smallest tincture

of partiality in favour of Mr. Southwell, whose visit into Yorkshire, I was nearly persuaded, did not point to me for its object, but to Juliana Southern, whose attachment to my Brother, I concluded, he might not, perhaps, be so perfectly convinced of.

Louisa's raillery on the occasion, most certainly, threw me into some confusion, whilst her allusions were far from being displeasing. You shall, however, have them in her own words, with the remainder of the letters which I received, during her continuance in Ireland.

“ To Miss Georgina Bellmour.

Coolcliffe, July 17, 1782.

AND so, Mistress Georgina, Myrtle Grove has been honoured with an unexpected visit from the Honourable
Frederic

Frederic Southwell.—Mighty well, indeed, and just as I should wish it;—and now, my good Madam, may I presume to ask, which of the fair ones under Lady Avondale's protection drew him thither? Or was it merely a motive of friendship to the worthy old Dowager, which brought him so many miles from Broomsgrove Castle? If the latter, he was wonderfully good-natured.

And now methinks, I see a deeper shade of pink overspread the cheeks of the younger of my blue-eyed Sisters, on the perusal of my foolish questions; when turning to Emma, with one of her bewitching smiles, she says, “What can the giddy girl mean by such absurdity?”—but be you silent, my dear Emma, that I may answer.

I mean

I mean no more, sweet Lady, than that I can form ideas, although so young; and since you are so penurious of your intelligence, and did not inform me, how this same accomplished Gentleman conducted himself whilst at Myrtle Grove;—how he looked;—who he looked at;—how he talked;—who he talked to;—&c. &c.—I will keep my conjectures to myself:—so now, Mistress *Churl*, I shall trouble myself no more about you and your visiter, but return to my own little affairs at Cooclisfe.

And therefore, Georgina, I will introduce you into a new circle of acquaintances, with whom I spent the greatest part of yesterday, having been invited with the whole family of the Flyns (root and branch) to a christening at Mr. Fitzpatrick's, a Farmer, who lives about five miles from
hence;

hence; and as the invitation had been given near a fortnight before, there was sufficient time for the most wonderful preparations, among my female Cousins, to display the full power of all their killing airs.

Fashions from my wardrobe being collected with the nicest care, a mantuamaker was closeted for several days with Constance and Flora, to make up gowns of white chintz, which my Aunt, through my importunities, had bought for them from a travelling pedlar; whilst Fanny, at my desire, assisted Arabella in the millinery matters, and I superintended the whole, from an earnest wish to have the girls look enchantingly, Flora having informed me, as a great secret, that Mr. Felix M'Dermott (just come from Dublin) was to be at the christening;
and

and that the Miss Fitzpatricks were setting their caps at him, as he was thought to be as good a match as any in the country.

The night preceeding the great, the important day—the young ladies retired to their chambers, an hour, at least, before their usual time, in order to make use of a fine wash composed of bean blossoms, herbs, butter-milk, and many other ingredients, which they hoped might give a captivating lustre to their complexions.

Well, Ma'm,—as they went to bed with the lamb, so they arose with the lark, to begin the arduous toil of decoration ; and as Fanny dressed them, their clothes were well put on, and their appearance was elegantly simple ; so that I did not harbour a doubt of
the

the lovely Florinda being the successful fair.

At one o'clock, the chair, *car*, and horses were led to the door ; but here I think it necessary (as you are totally unacquainted with the construction of a *car*, which is, I believe, a vehicle peculiar to this kingdom) to give you the best description of one that I am able.

It is formed by two long square shafts, one end of which rests on the horse's back by a strong band, and the other on an axle-tree with two solid wheels, which raise it about eighteen inches from the ground : from the middle down to the axle-tree, these shafts are united by four or five flat bars of wood, and form the principal body of the car, with the addition of a small stage elevated, perhaps, a foot above

above the axle-tree : they are drawn by one horse, and generally used, like our waggons, for the conveyance of goods and merchandize ; but when, for the accommodation of a party like ours, a feather-bed or mattraß, covered with a quilt, is placed upon it, and the company (often to the number of nine or ten) sit round the *car*, with their legs dangling to the ground.

And now having described this elegant travelling machine, we'll proceed without farther delay to Mr. Fitzpatrick's in the following order : my Aunt, with Mrs. Letitia Nugent (a *twentieth* Cousin of ours, who is on a visit at Coolcliffe) mounted in the good old family chair, smartly cleaned up for so particular an occasion ; next were seated in the *car*, my Cousins Constantia, Florinda, and Helen, accompanied

accompanied by my Ladyship, and attended by Mr. Flyn, Arabella, Owen, Valentine, and Augustus, on horseback—a pretty decent number from one house to a dinner party, you will say!—but it is reckoned nothing here.

When we came within about a quarter of a mile of a small village, through which we were to pass, Valentine (who is indeed a *wild Irishman*) rode forward, and told the villagers, that a bride would in a few minutes make her appearance among them, and that she was on horseback. This intelligence was sufficient, for no sooner had we arrived in the village, than Arabella (who for this sport was *dub'd a bride*) received a complimentary volley of numberless *cabbage stalks*, and *old shors* showered on her by the cottagers who at the same instant poured

poured forth their most fervent prayers for her happiness.

Never, I believe, was astonishment greater than mine at this attack against poor Arabella, until Constantia informed me, “ That it was an old custom among the lower Irish, to bestow that kind of benediction upon a bride, when she was removing to her husband’s habitation; as they conceived there was good luck to a new married woman, in a *cabbage stalk* and an *old shoe* thrown in that manner.

Sprightly too was as much surprised at Louisa; and not approving of such a rough salutation, flew from it, and threw his fair burden on a nice grass turf, at some small distance from the scene of congratulation, where we soon
after

after picked her up unhurt, with only a little discomposure in her dress, which Flora and Helen quickly adjusted; when she re-assumed her saddle, and we got to our journey's end without any farther accident.

No sooner did we arrive, than Mr. Fitzpatrick (who came out to receive us) hastily demanded of my Aunt, "where the rest of the children were? and if they were not coming?" And upon her answering, "That she thought she had brought enough," he expressed himself with great dissatisfaction at her unkind and unneighbourly conduct.

On entering the house, we found it filled with company; and amongst them Mr. and Mrs. George Flyn, which pleased me not a little, as
you

you know they stand high in my favour.

Mrs. Fitzpatrick overwhelmed us with her careffes and hearty welcomes; and having kissed the entire tribe of Coolcliffe, the rest of the company performed the same dreadful operation. She also inquired of my Aunt, "Where Robert and Mariana were?" and on being informed, that they were left at home, she, with great earnestness requested, to have the chair sent back for them, saying, "That a christening did not happen every day at her house; and it was unfriendly not to bring the poor things to dance with her little ones."

The ceremony of baptism being over, I had leisure to make my observations on the Misses of the house, whom

whom I soon perceived to be extremely vain, with an affectation of being very well-bred and fashionable; their dress was most violently fine, but they wanted the beauty, humility, and artless air and manners of the Flyns.

With an appearance of indifference, they examined most minutely every article of mine and my Cousins dress, and then with a look of high triumph, viewed their own: their impatience and uneasiness for the arrival of the happy Mr. M'Dermott (who as yet had not graced the assembly) was too visible to pass unnoticed, as one of them always started up from her seat upon the least sound of horses feet, exclaiming, "Here comes Felix M'Dermott! hang him, how late he is!"

At length, as dinner was announced, the much admired Gentleman entered,

ed, when a general flutter taking place among the ladies, in whose opinion he stood so highly, the Miss Fitzpatrick's threw themselves into fifty different attitudes, in the course of a minute: for my part, however, (from not having, I suppose, a sufficient share of discernment) he appeared to me to be very little superior to Owen Flyn, in many respects; but much inferior to him in point of diffidence, being as confident a coxcomb, as I ever met with.

When we entered the dining-parlour, such a profusion of eatables struck my view, that I stood for some minutes in silent astonishment:—Do not imagine, Georgina, that this repast was intermixed with soups, fricafees, or any nicknack dishes of a trifling nature.—No.—Every thing was truly substantial:

Substantial: such as *sirloins* and *rounds* of beef, *legs* and *saddles* of mutton, *loins* and *fillets* of veal, *hams*, *geese*, *turkies*, *fowls*, with *pies* and *puddings* out of number.

“ The table groan’d with piles of *solid* food,
And all was more than hospitably good.”

PARNEL.

Mrs. Fitzpatrick placed me on her right hand, saying, “ That she had danced at my Mamma’s wedding, and a child of sweet Miss Caroline’s should not be thought little of in her house:” this attention however to Miss Caroline’s child, turned out rather an unfortunate circumstance, for by the good woman’s assiduity, in constantly keeping my plate loaded almost up to my chin, (although I took several opportunities of sending it away, in

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hopes

hopes of evading her overwhelming hospitality) I had not room to cut my meat, and of course could eat but little dinner; which George Flyn observing, and that I must inevitably fall a sacrifice to Mrs. Fitzpatrick's superabundant care, made several attempts to rescue his overpowered Cousin; but all in vain, as she was continually turning to me, and saying, "My dear child, you are not well: you do not like your dinner."—when instantly an addition was made to the lofty fabric before me.

"Oh mortals! short of sight, who think the past
O'erblown misfortune still shall prove the last:
Alas! misfortunes travel in a train,
And oft in life form one perpetual chain."

This truth I fully experienced, for no sooner did I begin to congratulate myself, upon being freed from my Hostess's

Hostess's teasing assiduities, by the removal of the cloth, than an unfortunate calamity befel me, by the silly puppy Mr. Felix M'Dermott having taken it into his head, immediately after dinner was ended, to rivet his unmeaning eyes, in a stupid stare upon my face; so that as he sat nearly opposite to me on the other side of the table, I was in an absolute state of confinement, during the remainder of the time I continued in the dining-room, as I could not by any means look about, without encountering his goggle luminaries. Miss Eleonora Fitzpatrick, whose attention was soon awakened, by the cessation of an interesting conversation she was engaged in with this much admired youth, either from a motive of compassion for my situation, or from some particular feelings of her

own, attempted frequently to give his eyes a different direction, by telling him, "That his wine would be dead, or that he had not drank the last toast." Valentine Flyn likewise often endeavoured to relieve my embarrassment, by pulling him by the sleeve, and bursting into a loud fit of laughter: but nothing could possibly divert his provoking stare, until I was at length delivered from it, by the ladies retiring to the drawing-room, where as soon as tea and coffee were in readiness, we were joined by *Don Felix*, who, to display his extensive knowledge of politeness, would not allow the servants to hand about the cakes, &c. which were indeed most plentifully provided; but gallantly officiated himself, making his offerings to me so very frequent (without permission

million to refuse) that I was at last compelled to call a child of the house, to enjoy the superfluous bounty of his importunate care.

As soon as the rest of the Beaus had sufficiently indulged their festive inclination, with Mr. Fitzpatrick's claret (which some of them did to good effect) we were summoned to attend a *bagpipe* and two fiddles, in a *granary* cleaned out for the occasion, to which we ascended by a *ladder*: and was, I assure you, far from being a contemptible ball-room, when once we gained an entrance to it; nor were the lights for illuminating it ill-disposed of.

Partners were now engaged, when I was honoured by the choice of him, whom most I wished to avoid, which

poor Miss Elenora Fitzpatrick perceiving, she burst into a flood of tears, and immediately retired, being seized with a most excruciating tooth-ach; nor did she again make her appearance in the ball-room, until late in the evening, her pain was so excessive.

When I joined the set with my accomplished partner, think how great was my astonishment to perceive, that Miss Louisa, on whom such pains had been bestowed, and who, in her own opinion, seemed tolerably clever, was beyond a doubt the very worst dancer in the ball-room, as I could not, by any means, contrive to get my feet in humour with the *drone* of the *bagpipe*, during the first two dances; after which, I fell into the mode of footing with wonderful accuracy, and received numberless

berless compliments, upon the rapid progress I so soon made.

At eleven we were called down to supper, when a profusion of *solids*, equal to what had overwhelmed us at dinner, was spread out for our consumption, and with the same hospitable opportunities to eat.

The charming Felix, who sat next to me, for the purpose of seconding the assiduities of Mrs. Fitzpatrick in the care of his partner, teased me with many laboured compliments and intolerable attempts to be witty: and among other matters, abruptly asked me, "If I was engaged, and whether I had any objection to him or matrimony?" when mistaking the astonishment I by my looks expressed, for a simple kind of confusion, the forward

Oaf continued, "Come, Miss! don't be coy, for I assure you I am deeply in love with you: your Aunt will not, I *think*, be displeased, if you have a partiality for me: and if you please, I will give her a call to-morrow, to settle all matters."

I thanked him much for the high honour he intended me, telling him, "I was too young to think of marriage."—to which he answered, "My dear Miss, I like you the better for being young; it is a fault will mend every day:—you would not have me marry your old Cousin Letitia there?"—when looking at me, with an assurance, I do suppose, of receiving an answer agreeable to his wish, he unfortunately perceived me endeavouring, with the utmost difficulty, to suppress a laugh; and at once altering the exulting

ing form of his features, and the tone of his voice, exclaimed, "Ho! ho! Miss, I suppose, I am not good enough for you?—but it matters not, as I can get a wife any day in the year, for asking for:—There is not one of the Miss Fitzpatricks, besides twenty other girls that I could name, who would not go from hence to Dublin barefooted, to get me for a Husband:—I chuse you, because your face hits my fancy;—but I don't value your disdain;—no, not a *rap farthing*."

As soon as I was able to compose my features, after hearing such a ridiculous declaration from this assuming blockhead, I assured him, "That I was conscious of the distinguished compliment he had paid me; and that I should ever retain the most exalted idea of the honour he intended me."

Was not this a delightful conquest? —I shall be vain of it for the remainder of my life :—Pray did I refuse the *Beau*, according to the true and proper form of Ladies, upon such interesting occasions?—or were mine the words, with which you would dismiss the Hon. Frederic Southwell, if he should take it into his head to address you, upon so very particular a subject?

About half past twelve, we again mounted the *ladder* to the *ball-room*, when the amusement of the evening was renewed; but as I really found myself exceedingly fatigued, by the unusual method of footing, which I had so lately learned, I entreated permission from my admirer, to be excused from dancing any more; which in indulgence he most readily granted, attaching

taching himself for the remainder of the night (by way, I suppose, of proving to me his indifference) to Miss Elenora Fitzpatrick, who seemed by no means insensible of so valuable an acquisition; often bestowing upon poor Louisa a look of the most insulting triumph and ineffable disdain; and enjoying her happiness until four in the morning, when we returned to Coolcliffe, with an additional load upon the *car* of various cakes sent by Mrs. Fitzpatrick to the children, who were left at home.

And now, my dear Georgina, amidst the novelties which surround me here, your Louisa would be the happiest of girls, did not a most alarming circumstance disturb her peace, and haunt her mind in many horrid shapes. Oh, Georgina! pity your poor Sister, and

feel for her distress, when she informs you, that peeping into her purse this morning, she, alas! only found *one solitary guinea*; and unless you are so friendly as to represent her pitiable case to the generous Dowager, it is impossible to say, what may become of the poor girl, in a strange country, many and many a weary mile from Myrtle Grove.

I am sure Lady Avondale will be surpris'd at this account, as she furnished me so liberally on my leaving London; yet I think she will not be much displeas'd, when I assure her, that I have not spent my money in foolish prodigality; but when in my excursions round this place, I beheld scenes of the highest distress, and have seen the finest children without shoes and stockings, or scarcely a morsel of
clothes

clothes to cover them (from the wretched inability of their parents to have it otherwise) my heart has melted; nor could I withhold that relief from their wants, which I had in my power to bestow. I have not forgot the principles of humanity she so early taught me; nor will I ever turn my face from misery, whilst Providence enables me to give comfort.

And now, my dear, I must be under the necessity of concluding, with this tale of woe, an epistle, whose brevity requires an apology; assuring you, that I should add many things more, was I not (most luckily perhaps for you) to dine at Mr. Gore's, and must therefore set about the task of decoration.

Farewell.

Farewel.—My thoughts are ever at Myrtle-Grove ; and *yours*, I'll dare be sworn, never take a flight to Broomsgrove-Castle.

L. S. B."

" To Miss Georgina Bellmour.

Coolcliffe, Aug. 8th, 1782.

" TO strike you with astonishment at once !" — I go to Silverfpring to morrow, to spend some time ! — " first recover that, and then thou shalt hear further !" — " Wonderful, you will say, after my Aunt's positive determination, that you should not do more than dine with any family, during your continuance in Ireland, lest you should give offence, were you to be partial to particular ones, in spending days with them ;" and yet, Georgina, it is not more wonderful than true, as I am positively

fitively to be at Silverspring to morrow; there to continue, for the space of seven days and nights, with my Aunt's absolute consent and approbation, given before proper witnesses, in the great parlour of Coolcliffe, in the fullest and most accurate manner: and now for the means by which so great a point was carried.

You must know then, Lady fair, that in a few days after I returned the visit paid me by Mr. and Mrs. Lindsay, they were suddenly called to attend their elder son, who was taken ill of a fever at Dr. B——'s, at the Black Rock, near Dublin. Providentially, however, he recovered; and as soon as he was able to travel, they brought him to Silverspring, where they arrived three days ago; and yesterday Mr. Lindsay coming to Coolcliffe, insisted to my Aunt,

Aunt, on his right (as my nearest relation in Ireland, herself and family excepted) to have me spend some time at his house before my return to England; in which he was powerfully seconded by Mrs. Letitia Nugent, (I will not the good creature a purse for it!) who joining her arguments with his, overcame the scruples of my Aunt, and at length convinced her, that no one could possibly take offence, at her consenting to so just and reasonable a request.

An Adventure.

Yesterday being the anniversary of my Aunt's birth's day, Mr. Flyn, in a fit of good humour, promised, that we should have a dance in the evening, upon condition, that we all worked for an hour after dinner, at *hay making*, in a close about a quarter of a mile distant

distant from the house ; to which proposal all readily agreeing, Owen and Augustus were dispatched to engage company and music.

My Cousins were all in an extacy at the thoughts of their ball, whilst I was in raptures at the idea of the satisfaction I should enjoy, in the novelty of my rustic vocation. The morning was to be employed in preparations for supper ; at three we were to dine ; at four to start for the close ; at half past five, when our toil was ended, to have a fillabub ; and at six to return home, to dress for the reception of our guests.

This plan of operation was totally laid by mine own dear Uncle himself ; and you'll doubtless wonder, how he came to be so very generous and good-natured ;

natured ; so to let you into a little bit of a secret, I must inform you, it proceeded, from his having been on that morning most agreeably surpris'd, by the arrival of a bank-note for one hundred pounds, sent to him by a tenant, who had eloped about ten years ago, so much in his debt, and had not been heard of until the receipt of this reviving sum.

Soon as dinner was over, my Aunt propos'd our setting off immediately, that we might walk slow, and be in the close a quarter of an hour before the time appointed for the commencement of our work, in order to arrange matters for the fillabub ; I excus'd myself, however, from accompanying them, saying, " That I wanted to write a few lines to the Dowager Lady Avondale, upon particular business ;
but

but that I should be in the field, before the time for beginning the intended work." On which Arabella politely offered to wait to be my conductor, whilst the rest of the family (Robert only excepted, who stayed to gather strawberries) marched slowly on.

I suppose, Georgina, that ere now you know Louisa better, than to imagine she would sit down to scribble, when there was any prospect of mirth or novelty before her.—No, my dear—forming an epistle was the very last of my thoughts.—“ Then what were your thoughts upon, Louisa?—Nothing good, I am certain.”—Hold, my pretty censor; hear me first, and then condemn me.

Whilst

Whilst I was at dinner, a whim occurred to me, which promised some amusement, and therefore I communicated it to Arabella, she being the best calculated for my purpose ; and both hastening to her chamber, as soon as the procession was absolutely in motion, we equipped ourselves in habits suited to the sphere we were to figure in that evening. Arabella's attire was a white linen gown, tied back with pale blue ribbon, in order to display a stuff petticoat of the same delicate colour ; her white linen apron was also folded on one side, for the same purpose ; her shoes were of black stuff, adorned with silver buckles ; her handkerchief pale blue and white silk, pinned under her gown, lest it should intercept the view of a blue ribbon *stomacher* and a silver *stay book* : Around her neck was a row of blue beads ; her gloves

gloves were of black silk, and her hat of straw, with blue ribbons, from under which flowed her lovely flaxen hair, in natural ringlets round her face and shoulders.

Our dress and appearance were alike in every particular, except, that instead of pale blue, I chose light green for my ornaments; and that nature, in forming us, gave me a different face, with auburne locks.

Well, Georgina! we did, to be sure, look most enchantingly—that is pos,—so down we sallied to the garden-house and stable, where we soon accommodated ourselves with rustic implements suited to our dress; Arabella with a small pitchfork, and your humble servant with a light rake; and thus equipped, we posted off, to offer our
best

best services to my *bounteous, charming* Uncle, attended only by little Robert, a laughing, cherry-cheeked boy, who carried a basket of strawberries in one hand, and a jug of cream in the other,

We had scarcely got out of the avenue, into the high road, before we were overtaken by two very fashionable, handsome young Gentlemen, on horseback, attended by two Servants, with portmanteaus: as soon as they came up, and viewed our *superlative* beauty, they alighted, and gave their horses to the Servants; when one of them, with a smile, thus addressed me: “Good day, my sweet maid; pray, can you inform me whose house that is we have just passed?”—“It is Mr. Flyn’s, Sir, a great farmer:” answered I, affecting a little of the country *brogue*, and an air of great simplicity:

simplicity :—" And pray," continued he, " what is your name, my lovely girl ?"—" *Rose*, Sir," returned I, courtesying :—" And your's, pretty lass ?" said the other Gentleman (whose accent at once proclaimed him to be a North Briton) accosting Arabella : " *Abia*," she replied :—" And pray," returned he, " who is so happy as to call you daughter ?"—" Why my Father sure ;" rejoined she, with a vacant stare.

At this the Gentleman smiled, and my Beau proceeded, " Where do you live, *Rosy* ?"—" At the mill," returned I :—" Is your Father a Miller ?" " Yes, an please you, Sir ;"—" His name, sweet innocence ?"—" *Thomas Oldfield*."—" And whereabouts is the mill ?" reassumed the Scot.—" La !" said *Abia* simply, " you must
be

be strangers indeed, else you must know our mill; why all the farmers in the country send their corn to be ground there;”—“and is this smiling rogue your Brother?”—“Yes,” answered Robert, drily, “I am the miller’s boy.”—“Where are you going in such haste?”—“We have been,” said I, “at harvest work for Mr. Flyn this fortnight past, and are now going to yon field to the young Misses, where they are to give us a fillabub; and then we are to go and dance in the great barn to a *piper*, because it is *Madam’s* birth-day.”

Being now arrived within one close of that to which we were engaged, we saw Flora and Marian approaching to us; when Robert, immediately laying down the strawberries and cream, ran to meet them: they soon came up
to

to my great alarm, least Arabella and I should be discovered ; but thanks to little Robert's foresight, which prevented our detection.

The Scottish Gentleman now fixed his eyes on Flora's face, and seemed quite lost in admiration of it. " O ! " said I, " here is Miss Florinda Flyn. " — " Miss Florinda Flyn, " echoed he involuntarily. — " Sir, " answered Flora, with a blush, and one of her very best courtesies : he seemed in confusion, but soon recovered, and paid her some pretty compliments, which she received with many blushes.

The voice of Mrs. Letitia Nugent now assailed our ears, calling out, " Girls, girls, we are waiting for you, " when turning to Flora, I said, " Miss Flora, your old aunt is calling you. " —

" Yes, *Rosy*, " returned she, " I was

sent to look for you and *Abia*, so we must bid these Gentlemen a good evening."—On which we bid them adieu, they first obtaining *Abia's* leave and mine to visit at the mill; and the Scot requesting the same permission from *Flora*, who told him, she could not grant it without her Mother's knowledge.

When we came up to Mr. Flyn, *Abia* and *Rose* accosted him with the greatest gravity, offering him their services, which he received with equal form, and an hour and a half was spent in the field, to the perfect satisfaction of every person present.

At the time appointed, we all returned to Coolcliff; but my Aunt and Mrs. Nugent were so much delighted with *Arabella's* dress and mine, that they would not suffer us to change them

them, so we remained in *masquerade* all the evening.

About seven, our company assembled, and after tea, George Flynn and Rosy Oldfield led the way, when fifteen couple followed to the largest parlour, where we danced, until summoned about twelve to supper, which was laid out in as handsome a manner, as our time would allow : what think you of my assisting in writing out the bill of fare, and making the confectionaries ? But really so it was, and the whole met with universal applause from the company, who, when supper was ended, returned to the ball-room, and danced until the sun had risen to light them home ;—and so ended the pleasures of the birth-night.

Good night, Georgina :—may your slumber be soft and unbroken, and your dreams of him you love :—while mine will be of the pleasures I am to experience to-morrow at Silverspring.

I was going to rest ; but upon second thoughts, I'll make Flora attend me to serenade Mrs. Letitia and Miss Constance ; we will wake them with soft melodious sounds, it being a lovely night for such a frolic.

— “ the moon,
Full orb'd, and breaking thro' the scatter'd clouds,
Shews her broad visage in the crimson'd east ;
Wide the pale deluge floats, and streaming mild
O'er the sky'd mountain to the shadowy vale,
While rocks and floods reflect the quivering gleam,
The whole air whitens with a boundless tide,
Of silver radiance, trembling round the world.”

THOMSON.

L E T T E R XXII.

I Intended giving the remainder of the letters sent me from Ireland, by Louisa, without permitting any other circumstance in my history to interrupt them; but as I recollect, that an event of a most pleasing nature occurred soon after the receipt of her last letter, (of which I immediately made her a partaker) it will be necessary to make my dear Mrs. Montague also acquainted with the incident, that she may be enabled to enter more fully into the spirit and meaning of Louisa's next epistle, which turned out to be the last she wrote to me from that kingdom.

In

In about a fortnight after Mr. Southwell paid his visit at Myrtle-Grove, the Dowager Lady Avondale, with Lady Hunter, Juliana Southern, Emma and me, went to Ravensdale, to spend the remainder of the summer with Mr. Belmour (her only brother) who was still a bachelor, although five years older than her Ladyship:—he was a fine healthy old Gentleman, and remarkable for good humour and high spirits.

It was the Dowager's intention to have got home to Richmond early in September, to be in readiness to receive my Father, who was expected home from America about that time; but by some lucky unexpected accident, he arrived in England one month sooner; when hastening first to Richmond, and then

to Myrtle-Grove, and not finding us at either, he hurried on to Ravensdale, where he arrived just at the instant, that Juliana and I were listening very attentively, near one of the park gates, to an old gipsy fortune-teller, who was then informing me, that I should be married to a very rich Nabob: at which we were laughing immoderately, when a chaise and four turned into the gate, and was proceeding most rapidly to the house; until a Gentleman who was in it called repeatedly to the postilions, "Stop, stop"—which having at last done, he got out, and advancing towards us, exclaimed, "Are these my children?"

Soon perceiving that it was my honoured and beloved Father's voice, I sprang forward to meet him, when my spirits were so overcome by joy and every

every tender feeling, at the sight of an object, on whom I had not fixed my longing eyes for seven years, that without being able to express a single word, I fainted in his arms, when he carried me to the chaise, and Juliana stepping in with him, we hastened to the house : the motion of the carriage however soon recovering me, I for some moments gazed upon him with a transport, I never before had felt, and dissolving into a flood of tears, found myself much relieved.

His arrival being announced throughout the house, Emma flew into his arms with the most unbounded joy and rapture ; but most fortunately bore the interview with more firmness, than I had done : not that her feelings were less delicate than mine ; but Mrs. Montague must remember, that she
had

had not been a spectator of those dreadful scenes of sorrow, with which I had seen our Father overwhelmed, and which rushed to my recollection on the instant of his appearance.

The Dowager and Mr. Bellmour received him with every mark of real friendship and regard, which my Father returned with a becoming cordiality; expressing himself in the highest terms of gratitude to her Ladyship, for the maternal care and tenderness she had extended to all his children; and complimenting her on the appearance of Miss Southern, whose attachment to his girls, he always heard of with secret satisfaction.

Poor Lady Hunter exerting all her resolution for the purpose, at last ventured down to bid him welcome,

which task she was with difficulty able to perform, from the interruption of her tears: when the sight of her, calling to his recollection the loss he had sustained, by the unhappy fate of his amiable and invaluable friend Sir William, he was compelled to quit her presence, to hide the strong emotions of his heart;—whilst she, no less struck at seeing him, retired to her chamber, to indulge in private, those melancholy reflections arising from the interview.

As soon as my Father had got the better of his feelings, on the remembrance of so dear and valuable a friend, and returned to us, he asked a thousand questions with the most anxious curiosity, about his little cherub Louisa; but in particular, whether she still preserved the remarkable likeness she bore

bore to his angel Caroline, on leaving America; and when we told him, that the resemblance became every day, if possible, more strong, he took me by the hand, and with a heavy sigh, replied, " Oh, Georgina ! I long, yet dread to see that charming girl."

When the excessive joy occasioned by my Father's safe return had subsided in some measure, and that the flutter and agitation which my spirits received by it, had been succeeded by calm and serious observation, I was much distressed at perceiving, that besides a settled gloom which was visible on his countenance, an uncommon cloud of melancholy often sunk him into the deepest thought, from which it was not always easy to arouse him ; whilst involuntary sighs seemed to force a
passage

passage from the inmost recesses of his soul : it was also evident that this unavailing grief had preyed upon his constitution, much more than might have been expected from the ravages of time, in a series of twice as many years, as he had been absent from us.

As Emma and I were happy in the enjoyment of the best of Father's company, we thought it would have been an unpardonable piece of cruelty, not to convey the joyful tidings both to Henry and Louisa, as soon as possible ; and therefore it was agreed between us, that whilst my Father and the Dowager were talking over family matters after dinner, on the day of his arrival, Emma should write to Henry, who was then at Brussels, whilst I addressed the little *haymaker*, whose answer on the subject, with the conclusion

sion of her transactions amongst our friends in Ireland, I will subjoin, as a sequel to the twenty-second letter of my history.

“ To Miss Georgina Bellmour.

Silver Spring, Aug. 14, 1782.

“ To this great loss a sea of tears is due.”

WALLER.

LOUISA is now under the roof, where the best of Mothers first drew breath; and writing in that very apartment, long distinguished by the title of Miss Caroline's chamber, the furniture of which, I am informed, was chosen by that Angel; Mr. Lindsay having so great a respect for the memory of this amiable relation, that he never allowed a single article to be removed from the spot he found it in, on taking possession of the house.

Do

Do not be surprised, Georgina, if you find yourself infected with peculiar sadness, for in spite of every effort, I have absolutely caught the disease of melancholy from the air in this chamber.

Oh! thou dear shade of her I mourn! if thou art near, teach thy rebellious child the path of resignation! instruct her in the virtues thou hast practised; and lead her to those heavenly realms, where thou art blessed! I strive to conquer this unavailing sorrow, but

“In vain alas! for every thing
Which I have known belong to you,
This room does to my fancy bring,
And makes my old wound bleed anew.”

WALLER.

In continuation.

I found my heart so full, that I was obliged to give free scope to tears, and after a plentiful shower, I find my
sinking

sinking spirits again afloat, so that I shall now be able to proceed on my journey to Silverspring.

On the appearance of Mr. Lindsay's chaise and four, the morning I left Coolcliffe, my heart began to flutter, as if an event, of the utmost consequence to my future happiness in life, was going to ensue; but you know how fond I am of variety, and will not therefore wonder: the feelings of my female Cousins were, however, very different, as they cried and sobbed, as if they were never more to behold me: I was, I must confess, a little overcome by this instance of affection, and great as my impatience was to be gone, I could not avoid stopping to drop a tear or two, and endeavoured to sooth their heavy affliction, by reminding them, that I was only going

going for one week, which would soon be over; and then said I, "We may probably have some more adventures with the handsome beaus: hold up thy head, Flora, as I am sure one of them is a knight, who comes to free thee from a state of mediocrity!"—Flora smiled amidst her tears, and I embraced the weeping fair ones.

The sorrows of Coolcliffe soon giving way to the pleasures I expected at Silverspring, I flew into the chaise, and soon arrived there, when I was received at the hall door by Mr. Lindsay, who conducted me to the draw-room, where several Ladies and Gentlemen, whom I had never seen before, were assembled, with many others of my acquaintance; and my reception from Mrs. Lindsay was highly flattering.

I had

I had not long been seated, before a Gentleman entered the room, whom I perceived to be the very same, who had particularly distinguished *Rosy Oldfield*; at first I flattered myself that the alteration in my dress, air, and accent, with the style of company I was now in, would so totally have concealed me from his knowledge, that the *millers*' daughter could never be discovered at Silver Spring; but his penetrating eye in one moment overturned all my hopes, for no sooner did Mrs. Lindsay introduce me to him, as Miss Louisa Bellmour, and announced him to be her Nephew, Sir Theodosius Vernon, than he with a smile, addressed her thus, "I thank you very much, for the honour of this introduction to Miss Louisa Bellmour; and in return for your kindness, give me leave to introduce you, Madam,

to

to the acquaintance of *Rosy Oldfield*, for positively this arch young Lady is the identical *hay nymph*, who has been the theme of my conversation, and subject of my thoughts, ever since last Friday."

Provoking creature!—the North Briton entered just as I was convicted for an impostor, and would not, I am sure, have recognised me, had not that quick observer, Sir Theodosius, informed him, that under the disguise of a young Lady of fashion, he would find one of the fair *Maids of the Mill*.

I thought Mrs. Lindsay, and all the company, never would have ceased laughing, when Sir Theodosius fully explained to them the particulars of our adventure: indeed, I at last could not help entering into their merriment,

ment, from the humorous manner, in which he related every circumstance; and his candid confession, of having been so fairly taken in, that he had that morning, with Captain Gordon, rode at least twenty miles, in search of *Miller Oldfield's*; and were just upon the point of going to Mr. Flyn's, to make a further inquiry, when the late hour of the day obliged them to return home to dress.

A summons to dinner put an end for the present, to any further anecdotes relative to the fair Impostors, at which I was not in the least displeased, although it produced a trifling circumstance I was nearly overcome by,

Looking at the pictures round the room, whilst the second course was serving up, I fixt my eyes on one directly

rectly opposite to me, representing a venerable old man sitting in an elbow-chair, with a charming boy playing at his feet; and at a small distance from them, a beautiful young Lady leaning carelessly on the shoulder of a very handsome man, in the dress of an officer; both gazing, with a seeming degree of pleasure and admiration, on the old Gentleman and child: being by some secret impulse instantly struck with the piece, (for you know, I was too young to remember any of them, except a faint recollection of Papa) I asked Sir Theodosius, who sat next to me, "Whether he knew for whom those figures were designed?" to which he replied, without considering to whom he addressed himself, "The late Mr. Lindsay, Colonel and Mrs. Bellmour, and their Son Edwin."

This

This information bringing to my recollection, what I have often heard you describe, placed our Brother Edwin, covered with wounds, struggling in the agonies of death, cold and speechless on his bed at Boston, pressing the hand of his beloved Mother, to express, "Farewel for ever."—Whilst the next instant brought her to my imagination, standing at the window, kissing the little infant Augustus, and sinking for ever, from the sight of her unhappy children into the devouring cruel flames: and then our honoured Grandfather receiving the abrupt intelligence of his adored Caroline's fate, from the brutal Flyn; and falling from his chair into the arms of death, in that very room, where I was then sitting.

All

All these circumstances were far too powerful, even for the spirits of Louisa, who, by endeavouring to conceal her feelings, was very near being thrown into a situation, which must have produced a very unpleasant confusion in the company: Sir Theodosius Vernon, however, fortunately prevented it; for at once recollecting to whom he had given the information about the picture, he kept his eyes attentively fixt on me, and observing by my countenance the struggling agitation in my breast, he, with infinite good nature, insisted on my drinking a glass of wine; which I accepted, contrary to my usual custom, and instantly perceived its good effect upon my spirits, which soon revived, with the assistance of Sir Theodosius, who exerted himself during the remainder of the dinner, to divert my eyes and thoughts

thoughts from the picture, which had occasioned such melancholy emotions.

Soon as the cloth was removed, Captain Gordon, after some little hesitation, asked me in a faltering voice, "What *angelic Being* had assumed the name and character of *Mist Florinda Flyn?*" I could not help smiling at the poor man's perturbation, and at the exalted idea he had formed of the damsel, to whom there was some reason to suspect his having lost his heart, so I hastily put an end to every chimerical fancy, which love might have induced him to entertain of her, by informing him, "That she was neither Goddess, Empress, Archduchess, Heiress, or any other Being, than simply Florinda, third daughter to Patrick Flyn, Farmer of Coolcliffe, in the County of Mayo, and my first Cousin."

In

In the evening there was a most delightful concert, most of the party being musical, and some of them fine performers, particularly Sir Theodosius Vernon. I was called upon to join the band; but the idea of exhibiting before so many auditors of judgment, threw me into a sudden tremor, which obliged me to request of Mrs. Lindsay, to excuse me on that occasion, and relieve me from a dreadful fright. She was so kind as to comply with my desire, "For that time *only*," as she said, and I enjoyed a most truly pleasing evening.

After supper, about three parts of the company took leave, the rest being visitors like myself; when Mrs. Lindsay conducted me to my chamber (which Fanny, whilst I was undressing, informed me had been my
dear

dear Mamma's) and after entreating me to consider myself at Silver Spring, as much at my ease in every respect, as if I was with my Sisters, at the Dowager Lady Avondale's, bad me a good night, and embraced me with great affection. She is a most charming woman, and though many years younger than Mr. Lindsay, appears to be extremely happy, as he seems to be of a most amiable disposition: they have four sweet children, the eldest of whom is a boy ten years old.

Would you think it, Georgina, that no sooner was I left alone, than the reflection of where I then was, drew a shower of tears from my eyes; which were, indeed, of real service, as I had not perfectly thrown off the effects occasioned by the pictures; and produced a tranquil slumber, by

which my spirits were by the morning perfectly ripe for any frolic.

After breakfast, a little concert was proposed, when I was obliged to sit down to the harpsichord; and though my performance was, in my own opinion, wretched, from my apprehensions of playing before so many judges, yet I was so elated by the applause I acquired,—you know I am vain, Georgina,—That being asked to sing, I exerted every power to please, and with such success, that before I had got through a dozen bars, Dr. Lambert, a physician, who stood directly opposite to me, with his mouth open to swallow every sound, fell into such extatic transport, that from being a very respectable looking gentleman, he was instantly transformed into a perfect *antic*: I never experienced such
a struggle

a struggle as I did that moment, not to stop short, rudely to indulge my risibility at his expence. I also observed Mrs. Lindsay, with tears of transport streaming from her eyes, during the continuance of my song, with which she was so delighted, that when it was ended, she caught me in her arms, and exclaimed, "Oh! my sweet girl, it was heavenly! it was terrific!" Sir Theodosius Vernon, likewise, thought proper to appear totally entranced.

"Don't you think it rather a misfortune, Georgina, to be overcome by such an enthusiastic extacy at melodious sounds?"

"My vanity in labouring to deserve applause, has, I assure you, been properly rewarded, being on all occasions

obliged to sing and play : my lute too has been sent for to Coolcliffe, so that I am compelled to thrum on it for hours. In short, Georgina, they have agreed, *nem. con.* that my musical powers are of the first order.

And now I must let you know, that the blind *urchin* has been rather busy at Silverspring, having pierced the heart of the gallant son of Mars, through the bright eyes of Flora Flyn; the man is absolutely in love, Georgina, past all redemption. I had not been four and twenty hours in the house, before I began to perceive, that all was not right within his breast.

He asked me so many questions about my Coz, that I at last questioned Sir Theodosius concerning him, when I was not displeased to find, that he is second son

son to a gentleman of large fortune in Argyleshire, and has a troop in the —th Dragoons, now quartered in Dublin; he is amiable, sensible, and accomplished; and a most particular friend of Sir Theodosius's.

Yesterday, the fighting Algernon Gordon politely informed me, that he was going to take a ride towards Coolcliffe, and that if I had any commands there, he would think himself highly honoured in being allowed to convey them; it required no great degree of penetration to discover the poor youth's drift, so I frankly promised him an introductory letter to his Goddess *Flora*: the man was all gratitude, and Sir Theodosius, who was to accompany him, coming in at that moment, I requested his permission, to trouble him with an epistle

to *Abia Oldfield*; he assenting, I retired to my chamber, sealed and directed a blank paper for *Flora*, and wrote a few lines to *Arabella*, informing her, that the bearer, *Mr. Macintosh*, was manager of the *Edinburgh Theatre*, who was come down to establish a play-house at *Castlebar*; and that his companion was a *Scotch Laird*, a friend of *Mr. Lindsay's*.

When the Beaus arrived at *Cool-cliffe*, they were ushered into the parlour to the Ladies, and upon producing their credentials, *Flora* burst into a fit of laughter, her swain waiting in amaze, to be welcomed as the friend of *Louisa Bellmour*; whilst *Arabella* requested *Mr. Macintosh* would be seated, and talked to him of his *Company*, earnestly inquiring about his success, and assuring him of her best wishes; and then

then address'd the staring Innamorato
as my *Lord*.

This Comedy of Errors continued
near a quarter of an hour, when Sir
Theodosius began to conceive, that
Louisa was the Queen of Frolics, and
immediately begged of Arabella to
show him my billet; she readily com-
plied, and Flora presented her's at the
same time to Captain Gordon; the
Gentlemen had now to announce them-
selves, after which they remained about
an hour with my Aunt and Cousins.

On their return to Silverspring, they
upbraided me for my treachery, but
I soon obtained the lover's pardon, by
assuring him, " That my motive for
not giving him a proper letter to his
fair one, was merely to oblige him;
for knowing that his stay in the coun-

try was limited, I considered such a prank as that I played him, a quicker mode to bring about a familiar acquaintance, than a formal introduction :—The forgiveness of Sir Theodosius was not so easily procured, as I was compelled to sing four songs, play two lessons on the harpsichord, and as many on the lute, before I could obtain it :—However, amidst all my pranks, matters absolutely begin to wear a serious aspect, in favour of our Cousin Flora, as the noble Captain is gone alone this morning, to pay his devoirs at Coolcliffe.

I have had a visit since I came to Silverpring, from Farmer Brown and his wife ; who came on purpose to see the cause of their Son's good fortune, as they styled me : they are a venerable old couple, and poured forth a
profusion

profusion of blessings upon all our family : as they seemed eager to know several matters relative to their Son, which I could not answer, I referred them to Fanny, who I had called in, and introduced as his intended wife ; but not before I gave her that character she so justly merited ;—the old pair were so delighted with her appearance, that they requested of me, to oblige them with their *daughter's* company (as they called her) for some days, before she left the country ; to which I readily consented, promising, that she should wait on them the day I returned to Coolcliffe.

In the course of my conversation with them, I was informed of a circumstance, which, as it reflects the highest honor on Fanny's intended Husband, I must relate.—When Mr. Brown en-

tered into my Father's regiment, his parents, though not in affluence, were comfortably settled on a small farm, and continued so, until the time he was made a sergeant, when some unforeseen losses in cattle, joined to an unpropitious season, reduced them to great distress; which coming to the knowledge of their Son, he, from having the same idea of the *fifth* Commandment with honest *Corporal Trim*, constantly sent them one guinea every quarter, and since he was promoted, has increased their allowance to three more.—Generous Brown! such filial piety will ever meet with its just reward.

I will not finish this letter, as the post-man is expected every moment, and may probably bring me some pleasing intelligence from my dearest friends

friends at Ravensdale, whom I sincerely wish to see in a very few weeks more, as the time which my sweet Dowager said I should be absent, is very near expired.

The post-man is come and delivered me your charming letter :—Oh, Georgina ! I am almost out of my senses with joy ! I do not know what I am about !—what is the matter with me ? Why do I cry at a happiness I have long desired ?—and is my dearest Father once more in Europe ?—Can it be ?—If so, happy Emma, happy Georgina, to be this instant beholding him, after so long an absence, and sharing his fond and tender careffes ; whilst I, alas ! am hundreds and hundreds of miles distant from him :—My hand trembles so exceedingly, I can scarcely write ; I must call for a glass of water.

H 6

Tell

Tell me, Georgina, did he not say he wished to see his poor Louisa?— Or does he not talk of sending for me immediately?

Emma and Georgina, you were ever kind and affectionate to me, and I know you will endeavour to obtain permission for my return to England;— hasten the happy, happy summons:— for till that arrives, fond expectation will be the only comfort enjoyed by her, who is with most respectful duty to Papa, and sincere love to the Dowager, Lady Hunter, &c.

Georgina's

most truly

affectionate Sister,

LOUISA-SOPHIA BELLMOUR."

L E T.

L E T T E R XXII.

ALTHOUGH my Father, in a few days after his arrival at Ravensdale, wished very much to take an excursion into Northamptonshire and Hampshire, to arrange some affairs at his seats of Hazlewood and Rosehill, after so long an absence from the kingdom, yet Mr. Bellmour would by no means hear of it; telling him, "That since he became master of Ravensdale-house, he never could have the pleasure of his company in it, owing to the unfortunate American war; and that since he had now got possession of him, they should not so readily part, unless he chose to declare a war with him, equally unnatural."—

tural."—My Father was therefore under the necessity of complying with the old Gentleman's desire, and continued three weeks longer with him, Mr. Bellmour exerting all his powers to render our residence at his house agreeable, which the society of my Father did not a little contribute to, as he was often so good to entertain us with some anecdotes of himself, after Louisa and I took our departure from America, which being chiefly composed of dangers, fatigues, and other inconveniences incidental to his profession, are unnecessary to be related to my dear Mrs. Montague.

Among the other amusements we enjoyed at Ravensdale, riding on horseback was a very favourite one of Mr. Bellmour's; and he was never so happy, as when my Father and he were accom-

accompanied by Juliana, Emma, and me (which indeed was generally the case) that he might shew us every thing worthy of notice in the country ; but particularly on his own estate, which was very extensive and highly improved, and was to be the inheritance of my Father at his death : a circumstance which the worthy old man often dwelt on with seeming pleasure, pointing out to him, every now and then, the several plantations he had made on different parts of the land, which he was certain would well repay the trouble and expence.

But enlarging one day more than usual on these improvements, he with a smile fully expressive of a benign and generous heart, said, “ I have taken great pains, and receive a secret pleasure in doing all this, for the advantage

vantage of you Augustus, and your Henry, as I shall not live to see them arrive at perfection: I only consider myself your steward, for the present; and when Providence is pleased to discharge me from the trust, I hope you will have no reason to complain, of my having been an unfaithful one."

My Father overcome by this affectionate address, returned his sincerest acknowledgements, for so singular an instance of attention to his and Henry's future interest, hoping, "That many years might elapse before Ravensdale was deprived of its present worthy possessor:"—With tears of pleasure trickling down his cheeks, the respectable old man replied, "From my soul Augustus, I believe you; for I know you are incapable of a falsehood:"—then turning to his Sister the Dowager

Dowager, he with great good-nature, said, "Why need my observations to our kinsman make you look thoughtful?—Remember that I am five years older than you Juliana, and therefore may be allowed, to think of making room for a younger man :—but whenever that happens, be satisfied I shall not forget your Olivia and her children."—The feeling Dowager was not insensible to such fraternal regard, and my Father found it no easy task to raise her spirits, by engaging her in a conversation of a less serious nature.

One day Lady Hunter, Juliana, Emma and myself, having resolved to take a ramble, attended only by two servants, we after an hour's riding, came to a very narrow lane, shaded on one side by lofty elms, and bounded on the other by an hawthorn hedge, over which

which a most enchanting prospect opened to the view. The servants who attended us being as ignorant of the termination of the road as ourselves, we were impelled by curiosity to find it out, and proceeded forward about four miles, the prospect becoming still more interesting every step, until we came to the declivity of a gently rising hill, at the foot of which ran a winding rivulet; where on the stump of an old tree adjoining, sat a beautiful boy about seven years old, crying and sobing, as if its little heart would break;—no sooner had we approached him near enough to be heard, than with uplifted hands, he supplicated us, “To give him a morsel of bread to carry to his Mamma, who was dying for want.”

As

As this innocent tale of woe was not told to callous hearts, we asked the child, "Where his Mamma was :"—to which he replied, "Just bye ; and if you will go with me, you will see whether I tell a lie ; and whether our cruel Lady would not pity poor Mamma, was she to see her."

In an instant we all jumped from our horses, which leaving with the servants, we followed the boy by a narrow path along the rivulet side ; and arriving in about five minutes at a small cottage, he opened the door, and cried out, "Here, Grand-mamma, are some of those angels, you told me my little Sister was gone to, come to give poor Mamma a bit of bread."—Entering with the child, a sight presented itself, which struck us with horror and
amaze,

amaze, and instantly excited every feeling of humanity.

Close to a fire made of brambles, sat a young man in a very strong fit of the ague, with a countenance expressive of the deepest woe; and his languid eyes fixed upon a young woman, who lay upon a miserable bed in a corner of the cottage, surrounded by four children crying for food, and all younger than the boy, who had conducted us to this spot of wretchedness: at the head of the bed stood a woman of about sixty years of age, with a particular wildness in her looks, holding a hand of the young woman, who appeared extremely ill and weak: and to complete this shocking scene, an infant of about a month old lay in the arms of death, upon a small box,
in

in a corner of the hovel : yet notwithstanding the poverty which on every side encompassed this unhappy family, it was easy to discern from their appearance, that they had seen better days.

The moment our arrival was announced by the little boy, the young woman started from her bed, exclaiming, " If you have any bread, give it to my husband and our helpless children : " and then sunk down, as if so trifling an exertion had overcome her strength.

The gentle Emma with precipitation hurried from the cottage, ordering one of the servants to go with the utmost speed to a village we had passed through, at no great distance, and bring

bring from it whatever eatables he could obtain; with a physician or apothecary if he could find one.

The old woman roused by our entrance, stepped forward, and fell upon her knees; when turning her eyes to heaven, she uttered a short ejaculation, in so low a voice, that we could not hear her; and then rising went to the bed, saying, "look here my child! Heaven has sent us that relief, which you so fervently prayed for:—these Ladies feel compassion for our sufferings, the tear of pity having already found a passage down their cheeks."

Lady Hunter now approached the bed, taking one of the young woman's hands into her's; but no sooner had she felt it cold and nearly inanimate, than

than her compassionate heart stopping all power of utterance, prevented her from pouring that balm of comfort into the bosom of this afflicted Mother which she intended; and she sunk upon the bed quite drown'd in tears; which being observed by the young woman, she raised herself with difficulty upon an elbow, surveying her Ladyship with great attention, and then in an extacy uttered, "And will you, Madam, take care of my Charles, my children and my aged Mother?—My good and gracious God, I thank thee!—I see she will.—And is there still so much humanity to be found on earth?—Will you, Madam, have my little babe inter'd with me?—Now I shall have nothing to disturb my mind in my last moments."

Juliana,

Juliana, no longer able to stand this affecting scene, was forced out of the cottage, when meeting Emma, they both sat down under a tree, to give a vent by tears, to their feelings for this wretched family.

I was not, you may easily suppose, an idle spectator at such uncommon distress, being employed in comforting the little children, and weeping over them, as they gathered round me; when the emaciated Father tottered towards me, and falling on one knee, took my hand, which pressing to his lips, he fully by his tears expressed that gratitude which filled his heart: raising him from this humble posture, he, after several fruitless efforts, at length articulated, " Oh, Madam! will you be thus kind to my poor children, when my dearest Harriot

riot and I are laid low, as soon will be the case?" To this piteous address I was unable to make any other return, than by embracing his charming children alternately; which sufficiently proving to him the purport of my intentions, he sunk upon his chair, overwhelmed by the comfort arising from my mute assurance.

In short, Mrs. Montague, the feelings of Lady Hunter and Georgina were so much affected by this scene of wretchedness, that we sat without the power of offering, by words, that consolation to the unhappy family, which our hearts were full of; but our tears appeared to them more than sufficiently eloquent on the melancholy occasion.

Juliana and Emma at length ran into the cottage, followed by a servant

with a basket of provisions, which we instantly distributed amongst these objects of compassion, who received it with an avidity truly shocking, except the wretched mother, whose appetite was nearly destroyed by sickness and distress.

Being informed by the servant, that the village he had bought the provisions in, did not afford even an apothecary; and being impatient to obtain every immediate assistance for this family, we soon took our leave, promising that they should again hear from us before night.

Returning to Ravensdale with the utmost expedition, and meeting my Father in the court, who came out to receive us, he was greatly alarmed at the uncommon dejection which displayed

played itself, on every countenance, and hastily demanded, "Whether any of us had fallen;" to which Lady Hunter answered, "No, but we have been witness to such a scene of wretchedness and penury, Colonel, that we are entirely overcome by it; yet hope by yours, the Dowager's and Mr. Bellmour's assistance, soon to relieve it."

We all hastened to the drawing-room, where we found the Dowager and her Brother, when Lady Hunter most emphatically recited every circumstance relative to these unhappy cottagers, which we had seen and heard.

Such a dismal tale of sorrow soon affected the amiable Dowager; and before Lady Hunter had half finished

the deplorable story, my Father's purse was, by an involuntary impulse, drawn from his pocket ; whilst Mr. Bellmour sobbing like a child who had been severely corrected, vehemently rang the bell ; and after begging her Ladyship's pardon for the interruption, ordered the servant who answered it, instantly to go with a chaise and four, as fast as they could drive, to bring Dr. Molesworth to Ravensdale ; and if he could not be found, Mr. Goddard, the apothecary. Then listening to the remainder of her narrative, he called for the old steward, desiring him to inquire immediately among the tenants, which of them could, with the least inconvenience to themselves, accommodate a young man and his wife, who were ill, but not with any infectious distemper ; and afterwards ordered Mrs. Dodd, the housekeeper, to

go with a coach to the cottage, which one of the servants, who was out with the Ladies in the morning, would shew her, and to carry every thing in it that she imagined would be necessary, for a large family oppressed by poverty and sickness; and after directing her to take up from a village, which lay in her way, a careful, tender nurse, to be left at the cottage, desired, that she might bring back in the coach to Ravensdale, whatever part of the distressed family she thought proper.

Mrs. Dodd, with eager satisfaction, undertook the execution of her master's orders, and before it might be well supposed, that the coach could be in readiness, she had set off; for the spirit of philanthropy was so universal in this family, that every servant, from the example of Mr. Bellmour, enjoyed

a pleasure, in executing his munificent and charitable intentions, as they well knew without their doing so, they could not hope for his regard and favour.

Soon after her departure, the steward returned to inform Mr. Bellmour, " That all the tenants were equally anxious to oblige him; but that he had given the preference to Farmer Leland, for the reception of the couple he wished to have accommodated, from his vicinity to their cottage."

This intelligence was soon followed by the arrival of the chaise, with Mr. Goddard, (Dr. Moleworth being from home) when Mr. Bellmour briefly informing him of the situation of the cottage family, that good gentleman hurried to them, to render every assistance

sistance in his power ; promising to call at Ravensdale before he returned home, to acquaint us with his opinion on their situation.

We now sat down to dinner without much appetite ; nor did we talk on any other subject than the unhappy family, which had fallen so fortunately under our protection ; and of the many miserable objects who perish daily, for want of that relief, which affluence, by retrenching some trifling luxuries, might readily supply.

About eight in the evening, Mr. Goddard and Mrs. Dodd returned from the cottage, the former acquainting us, “ That he found his patient in a most unpromising way : that Mr. Dison, in addition to a tertian

struggle with, besides a body weakened to a high degree, from not having tasted food for several hours; and that he considered his life in a most precarious state: but that Mrs. Dison was in imminent danger, from a want of proper nourishment in her last lying-in, and a succession of heavy misfortunes: to which was now joined a fever, in consequence of the unexpected sunshine, which that day dawned upon her, by the appearance of the Ladies present; yet he was under the necessity of removing her to Farmer Leland's, it being impossible she could remain in the miserable hovel he found her, devoid of every comfortable convenience; and that even so short a distance as she was removed, had overcome her very much."

As soon as Mr. Goddard had taken
his

his leave to hasten home, in order to prepare some proper medicines to send his patients, Mrs. Dodd informed us, " That she had done every thing in her power to make Mr. Dison and his family comfortable ; having on her first arrival at their cottage sent for an undertaker, to remove the deceased infant ; and finding that it would be almost instant death to Mrs. Dison, to separate any part of the family from her, she sent to Mrs. Leland, to know if she could accommodate the whole, which she with great good nature consented to, and had them all removed immediately, with the tenderest attention : that the gratitude expressed by these unhappy people, for the humane assistance given to their necessities, was beyond any thing she had ever heard : and that from some particular circumstances,

stances, she had reason to believe Mr. Difon was a clergyman."

After breakfast on the ensuing day, Juliana, Emma, and myself, rode to Leland farm, near which we met Dr. Molefworth, who expressed as great an alarm for the safety of Mr. and Mrs. Difon, as Mr. Goddard had done upon the preceding day; telling us, "That he had given something to the Lady, which he hoped would produce a favourable turn to her disorder; for unless that fortunate circumstance took place, and that he could with certainty pronounce Mrs. Difon out of danger, he very much feared it would not be in his power to remove the most alarming symptom in her Husband's case."

No

No sooner were we entered into Leland's house, than we were surrounded by Mr. Dison's children, who testified their joy by a thousand little innocent means. Horatio, the eldest, entreating of us, "not to let his Papa and Mamma go after his little Sister; for if they do," continued the pretty pratler, "Horatio will go with them."

Mrs. Beauclere, their Grandmother, now came to us, and after pouring forth the effusions of her grateful heart, for the benefits conferred upon her family, she thus addressed herself to Emma:—"It would have afforded me no small degree of consolation, in my misfortunes, Madam, could I have reason to reflect, that the ruin of my family was occasioned, by ensuring happiness to the truly amiable Miss Bellmour: yet still I could not be

rendered completely miserable, whilst conscious of having used every effort in my power to prevent injustice."

Observing the surprise which this address had given to my Sister, Mrs. Beauclere, with great politeness, added, "Well, indeed, Madam, may you be surprised, when I inform you, that the person who has now the honour of addressing you is she, who was companion to Lady Abberville, and who wrote that letter to you from Bath, which was rendered useless, by your not being then in London, as well as Lord and Lady Broomsgrove."

The tender-hearted Emma, shocked at the idea, that the good offices of Mrs. Beauclere towards her should be productive of such fatal consequences, assured her, "That the kind letter
she

she had been so good to send her, never could by any means have fallen into the hands of Lord or Lady Abberville; nor did they ever receive the most distant hint of such a letter having been wrote."

"I know it did not," answered Mrs. Beaulere, "and therefore think I ought to inform you, Madam, and these Ladies, of every particular relative to myself and family, that you may be assured, your benevolence is not exerted upon those, who, by idleness or extravagance, have reduced themselves to that state of wretchedness, from which your humanity has rescued them."

To which Emma replied, "That we should be happy to hear any thing she wished to relate, as soon as she had a little

little recovered her spirits; that at present she ought not to fatigue herself by too great exertions, but endeavour to compose her mind."

After thanking us for our considerate attention, and promising to collect herself against the following day, this grateful old Lady concluded, by saying, "That she hoped we might have no objection to hear her story on the morrow, as she wished not to defer it longer; least Providence, by depriving her of her dearest Harriot, should incapacitate her from engaging on any subject, but the loss of so inestimable a child."

Mrs. Difon now calling for her Mother, we took our leave, promising to attend her on the following day; which appointment having communicated to the

the Dowager Lady Avondale, and Lady Hunter, they invited themselves to be of our party, at the recital of Mrs. Beauclere's story; that they might be enabled, by having heard it, to judge more distinctively, in what manner assistance could be most effectually given to her unhappy family. They therefore accompanied us to Leland farm on the following day, when we with great concern found, that Mrs. Difon's situation continued still unfavourable: but as this was a day of intermission from the ague, Mr. Difon received us with an address and politeness, which instantly won upon the Dowager.—He was proceeding to express the gratitude which filled his heart, when her Ladyship entreated, “ That he would not hurt the feelings of her young friends, by letting them see how much the trifling
acts

acts of humanity, which he mentioned, with such energy, had affected him; as they will," said she, "I am convinced, be more than amply recompensed, if hereafter they can see happiness restored to you and your family, through their endeavours."

Mr. Dison, overpowered by this address, delivered with such an engaging air of sincere philanthropy, bowed most respectfully (but with a look sufficiently expressive of what he wished to utter) and retired.

In a few minutes after, Mrs. Beauclere joined us, and apologized for Mr. Dison's abrupt departure, adding, "That he found it impossible to continue in the room with us, and not enlarge upon a subject, which ever must employ his thoughts; but which he

was

was prohibited from mentioning, by Lady Avondale: and as he was gone to watch his Harriot in a gentle slumber, she would take the opportunity of relating what she had promised on the preceding day.—After returning many thanks for the honour conferred on her by our attendance, she began the story, which my dear Mrs. Montague will find the subject of another letter.

LET-

M

LETTER XXIII.

MY Father's name was Aubrey :— he early in life embraced the military profession ; and about the twenty-sixth year of his age married Miss Clarissa Mildmay, Sister to the Countess of Bexley.—In a year after their marriage, I was born ; and in the course of another, an addition was made to the family, by the birth of a second Daughter, who received the name of Laura ; when, by some unknown accident, my Mother caught a violent cold in her lying-in, which settling on her lungs, she was ordered to Bristol Wells, where, in about a fortnight, Providence was pleased to terminate her life.

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My Father, who was inconsolable for the loss of his young and amiable wife, soon felt the effects of his unavailing grief, which so much impaired a healthy constitution, that at the expiration of four years, there remained but little hopes of his recovery; when apprehensive of a speedy dissolution, and wishing to leave a provision for his little girls, he applied for, and obtained leave to sell his commission, as Lieutenant Colonel in the —th Dragoons, but before the sale was perfectly completed, it was the will of Providence to take him from hence, to join his adored Clarissa; by which severe stroke poor Laura and I were thrown upon the world, two destitute and helpless orphans, my Father, like the generality of military men, having nothing to bequeath us, as he was only a soldier of fortune,
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and had, like the Earl of Bexley, married a dowerless young Lady: obtaining, however, through this connection with his Lordship, that rank in the army, of which he was at his death possessed.

The Earl and Countess of Bexley, were at Paris, when my Father died; but on receiving an account of the melancholy event, returned to England, when they lost not a moment in repairing to Stamford, to receive my Sister and me from Captain and Mrs. Pearson, (particular friends of my Father) who with great humanity had taken us under their protection, on his death.

We were now no longer the children of misery or want, as Lord and Lady Bexley received us as their's, and
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in every respect, to the last period of their lives, supplied the place of the most tender parents.

They had one only child, (Lord Beverley) at the time when Laura and I were brought into their family : he was about one year older than me, and the constant companion of all our little sports, until we separated to go to school ; discovering, even at that early period, a particular partiality for Laura, who was indeed a beautiful and engaging child ; and as his Lordship's fondness for her still became more visible, at every vacation when they met, it was impossible for his little assiduities not to create a reciprocal affection, as he was a charming lively boy.

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With pleasure my Uncle and Aunt observed their childish tenderness, which they hoped maturer years would strengthen; judiciously considering, that nothing could more firmly ensure domestic happiness for a darling Son, than encouraging an union between him and his cousin Laura, with whose mind, and every turn of disposition he must be so intimately acquainted, and whose infant blossoms promised such perfection in her riper years.

Rejoicing in this idea, they resolved to educate her as his intended wife, and employed such masters for her instruction, as were capable of giving information to the mind, and polishing the manners; a circumstance most fortunate for me, as I was made a partaker in every instructive pursuit, it being impossible for them to neglect me

me in this point, without proclaiming to the world their intentions, which they carefully concealed, even from Lord Beverley and Laura, wishing to leave the direction of their inclinations entirely to nature.

Laura, who possessed a most surprising genius, received every instruction with such remarkable avidity, that when she arrived at her sixteenth year, she stood, from general opinion, unrivalled in every branch of mental, as well as ornamental accomplishments; nor did I think, until a few days since, that it was possible to surpass her in personal loveliness.

Lord Beverley having about this period completed his studies at Cambridge, prepared to make the tour of Europe, which his Father intended should

should employ him, until he became of age;—and fixing on the Reverend Mr. Beauclere for his preceptor (a young gentleman of most distinguished abilities) they soon took leave of England; but not until Lord Beverley had made my Uncle acquainted with his attachment to his cousin Laura, and received his approbation of it.

During an absence of three years upon the Continent, his Lordship and Laura softened the pain of so tedious a separation, by a constant intercourse of letters, which effectually increased their growing passion: whilst Lord and Lady Bexley wishing to provide for me also by an advantageous marriage, encouraged the addresses of several men of fortune; but as I seemed insensible to the merit of all those who solicited

solicited my favourable opinion, every offer for an alliance was rejected by his Lordship, as neither he nor my Aunt wished to exert the least authority over my inclinations : Laura too was not without a share of admiration, but as the engagement with Lord Beverley was now beginning to be tolerably well known, no overtures of marriage were made on her account.

His Lordship at length returned to England, with that fund of information he had travelled for, and was universally allowed to be a most amiable and accomplished young nobleman : the meeting between him and Laura, you may well suppose, afforded inexpressible happiness to both.

On the first opportunity, he presented Mr. Beauclere to Lord Bexley, as a

man, who had executed the trust reposed in him, in so delicate and judicious a manner, that he begged leave to recommend him to his Lordship's favour and protection, adding, "That he considered himself under such obligations to Mr. Beauclere, that during life, he should entertain the highest respect for his merit, and be ever solicitous for the continuance of his friendship."

Lord Bexley, delighted with this unsolicited acknowledgment from his son, was by no means deficient in the most grateful professions to the deserving clergyman; entreating of him to remain with his companion, until he had it in his power to obtain for him a provision worthy his acceptance; to which Mr. Beauclere readily consented, from his great attachment to Lord
Beverley,

Beverley, who treated him (as did every part of the family) not as a dependent, but as a most respected friend.

As the day approached, on which Lord Beverley was to be of age, we all removed from London to Beverley, my Uncle's seat in Shropshire, where preparations were making for the celebration of it; and when it arrived, the number of nobility, gentry, and tenantry assembled on the occasion were astonishing, and evidently proved the respect in which the family were held throughout the country.

The gardens and pleasure grounds being laid out with splendid elegance for a *fête champêtre*, and the company all dressed in fancy habits, the effect was most delightful: and as every part was conducted with the highest

propriety and taste, an universal satisfaction was clearly visible.

As soon as the rejoicings for this happy occasion terminated, which was not until the expiration of a week, our family returned to town, to make arrangements for the intended nuptials of Lord Beverley and my Sister:—when, alas! Ladies, to prove the mutability of human happiness——

(Here the gentle Emma with sympathetic sorrow trembled and changed colour.)

the roses fled from Laura's cheeks; her bright eyes grew languid; and a cough, attended with a pain in her side, now joined their terrors to alarm us; having caught a cold at Beverley, dancing in the open air, which she carefully concealed, knowing what consternation it would occasion in the family.

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At first this alteration in her countenance was attributed to fatigue, but we too soon were fatally undeceived, as a violent spitting of blood immediately took place, which effectually confirmed all our apprehensions;—Lord Beverley was quite distracted at such an unexpected melancholy event; and no time was lost in removing her to Bristol wells; but to her (as had been the case with our Mother) those waters were inefficacious; when the air of Lisbon being next advised, she was conveyed there, accompanied by her unhappy Lover, Lord and Lady Bexley, Mr. Beauclere, and her wretched Sister, with Dr. Shenston, a most eminent physician.

She bore the voyage in such a favourable manner, that we were all filled with the most delusive hopes;

but the lovely girl, contrary to what is usual with persons labouring under her complaint, was conscious of her danger, and prepared for the awful moment of her dissolution, with that tranquillity, which religion, and a life spent in innocence can alone inspire; yet still a tear of fond regret would often find a passage down her cheek, whenever she looked attentively on those friends, she was soon to leave for ever.

On the fourth day after our arrival at Lisbon, Laura perceiving herself to be considerably worse, called for her Aunt and Uncle, and after returning them her warmest acknowledgments, for all the favours they had conferred upon her, and for their truly parental tenderness on every occasion to her and poor Eliza, gave them her last embrace;

embrace; which so overpowered them, that they were obliged to retire from her chamber with the utmost precipitation, to conceal from her the agonies occasioned by this dreadful interview.

Then desiring to see Lord Beverley, she took her leave of him, in terms so pathetic, that they will for ever dwell upon my mind; and concluded, by saying, “ I have no doubt, but I shall meet my Beverley, in those realms of bliss allotted for the good and virtuous.”—She afterwards endeavoured to sooth his Lordship’s affliction, whilst sufficient strength remained; but her feeble frame was at last so affected by his violent agitation, that I was under the necessity of sending for Mr. Beauclere, to assist me in forcing him out of her chamber.

It was indeed a painful task to both, his Lordship often regarding us with a supplicating eye, and saying in a low and plaintive tone of voice, "Cruel Eliza! unkind Beauclere! Why will you tear me from my Laura?—Since Death so soon asserts his claim over the beloved of my soul, why will you not allow me to gaze upon the Angel, until the last moment of her existence."—Upon my answering, "That when he could endure the painful interview, with more fortitude and composure, than as yet he had exerted, he should again return to her;" he exclaimed, "How can you talk to me, unfeeling Eliza, of fortitude and composure, when my heart is torn with bitter anguish, and all my fond hopes of future happiness so cruelly destroyed:" With some difficulty Mr. Beauclere led him to his apartment, where he
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endeavoured by every argument drawn from religion and good sense, to reconcile his Lordship to the heavy misfortune he must soon encounter; at the same time that this worthy man partook of all the sorrows of his beloved friend.

When I returned to Laura, she was wiping away those tears occasioned by the affecting interview with Lord Beverley; and no sooner did she perceive, that I took notice of it, than she said, "Think not my dearest Sister, that I repine at being summoned from this world:—No, Eliza, be satisfied I do not; but bidding an everlasting farewell to such Friends, as Heaven has blessed me with, rouses the voice of Nature in my breast, and forces me to confess my inability to part from you and them, without some heartfelt

struggles :”—After which, with the most astonishing composure, she repeated the following descriptive lines :

“ For who to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e’er resign’d,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing, ling’ring look behind ?
On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
Ev’n from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
Ev’n in our ashes live their wonted fires.”

GRAY.

Then turning to me, and perceiving my affliction, she continued,—
“ Why this unavailing sorrow, my dearest Sister and sincerest Friend ?—
Fy ! fy ! Eliza, do you lament the happiness, which awaits your Laura ?—
Remember it is the will of Heaven I should quickly end my earthy course ;
and I only go a little time before you ;
perhaps

perhaps we may again meet in a future state, and there renew our friendship and affection :—Indeed, Eliza, I doubt not but we shall.”

Fearful that the expressions of my grief should overcome her, as had been the case in her interview with the unhappy Beverley, I as much as was in my power suppressed them, entreating, that she would not exert her spirits, by offering such heavenly advice; but endeavour to compose herself, as Providence might still be so gracious, as not to deprive me of my beloved Laura;”—to which, she with a smile replied, “Do not flatter yourself, Eliza, for be assured a very few hours will put a termination to all your fond delusive hopes.”

Prophetic Laura!—Dr. Shenstone delivered the same opinion to her friends, and the very next morning extinguished her lamp of life: she expired in my arms; no sigh or pang apprised me of her dissolution; she closed her eyes, and smiling slept for ever.

The tide of sorrow which now flowed in upon the wretched Eliza, may be easily conceived, Ladies, when for a moment you reflect, on my having lost a Sister, whose virtues were universally acknowledged, and with whom, from the earliest period, I had lived in the strictest harmony and friendship, as I can aver with truth, that every thought of Laura's was made known to Eliza, who deposited all her secrets in the affectionate bosom of her Sister;—to be deprived

prived of so dear and valuable a relation, almost at the instant, when I hoped to see her the happiest of women; was a trying circumstance, particularly as I had not the assistance of any person, from whom I might expect the smallest consolation; Lord Beverley's feelings on so melancholy an event and disappointment to his future happiness, being too poignant, and engrossing every thought;—nor could Mr. Beauclere, whose humanity was extensive, for a moment leave his wretched Friend, to administer to me, those precepts of resignation to the decree of Providence, which I am persuaded he otherwise would have attempted:—my Uncle and Aunt also, who tenderly loved the amiable Laura, and lamented much her death, were too deeply interested in the consequences of their Son's affliction, to
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turn their thoughts on me : so that I was left a prey to the most severe and agonizing sorrow ; the effects of which soon suspending every faculty, I was thrown into a violent fever, which continued several days with such alarming symptoms, that I was on the verge of enjoying everlasting peace with my beloved Sister ;—it was, however, the will of Heaven to reserve me for more trials in this world, and to give a favourable turn to my disorder ; when I was declared to be out of danger by Dr. Shenston, whose unremitting attention during my illness I never shall forget.

As soon as I was able to undertake the voyage with safety, we all returned to England, along with the corpse of my adored Laura, who was interred at Beverley church, in the vault erected there

there by Lord Bexley, for our honoured Parents.

The loss of my Sister was too severely felt, by her surviving friends, not to impress their minds with a lasting sorrow; but particularly Lord Beverley, who must inevitably have sunk under the weight of his affliction, had it not been for the intervention of his valuable companion Mr. Beauclerc, who, by sympathizing, soothed his grief, and roused his fortitude by dint of well-timed reasoning: I also must confess an obligation to that Gentleman, for the consolation which he took frequent opportunities of offering to me, with every argument of persuasion; but sometimes with so much undesigned tenderness, that it awakened my suspicion of a secret, I never before had cause to think on.

Mr.

Mr. Beauclere had entertained a particular partiality for me, even from the commencement of his residence in Lord Bexley's family ; and finding that his passion every day increased, he, from a consideration of his dependant state, and a delicacy of sentiment, not very usual on such occasions, exerted all his powers to suppress it : but perceiving that a constant intercourse with the object of his affections, defeated all his generous resolutions, he determined, as soon as Lord Beverley had been made happy by the hand of Laura, to take his leave of the family, under some pretence ; and at a distance wait the issue of Lord Bexley's promised friendship, rather than remain under the hazard of encouraging a passion, which, if attended with success, might produce consequences inconsistent with his nice ideas of honour ; but the
event,

event, which so suddenly took place in the family, counteracting all his schemes, he was compelled to stay.

Thus situated, it was by no means surprising, or in the smallest degree censurable, that he should feel for my distress, and endeavour to alleviate my sorrow by every tender effort: nor can you wonder, Ladies, that I should be inclined to attribute this attention to its real motive, after allowing to Mr. Beauclere every virtue of humanity; or that I in my turn should become prejudiced in his favour.

I was however determined, not to allow the admission of more than a distant esteem for this young Gentleman, to disturb my mind; as I too well knew, that Lord and Lady Bexley would never listen to my forming a connection,

connection, so contrary to their views for my establishment in life : and without their approbation of the measure, I considered it would be ungenerous in me, to encourage his addresses, and thereby ruin all his expectations from Lord Bexley : happy in this idea, I thought myself secure ; but the experience of a very few weeks informed me, that I was totally deceived, my heart being absolutely attached to Mr. Beauclere.

Lord Beverley observing an unusual gloom upon the countenance of his Friend, importuned him frequently to tell the cause, assuring him, “ That if his distress of mind proceeded from any thing within his power to remove, he ought not to doubt his wish to do it : ” — Prevailed on by these sincere professions, Beauclere disclosed his passion

passion to his Lordship, but at the same time declared, "His never having made me acquainted with it, in such terms, as I could understand; or even if I did, that he had no right for many reasons, to expect or hope for a return."

Lord Beverley having received this information, used many stratagems to obtain my real opinion of his Friend, (which, with equal art, I evaded to discover to him) and exerted all his influence with Lord and Lady Bexley, to reconcile them to an union between me and Mr. Beauclere, in case it could be brought about.—His Lordship's frequent importunities at length prevailing on them, he brought them to consent, provided it was Miss Aubrey's wish. Elated with this success, he flew to me, and at once informing me

me of his Friend's attachment, and his reasons for not having personally avowed it to me, implored my pity for the wretched Beauclere, as Lord and Lady Bexley, he assured me, had left it entirely to myself to determine on his fate:—However, as I was by no means certain, that what Lord Beverley urged with so much warmth, was the real wish of my Aunt and Uncle, I still affected the same indifference for Mr. Beauclere, that I had done upon every former conversation, when that Gentleman was our subject; at which his Lordship was not a little disconcerted; nor was he able in several subsequent attempts to obtain more flattering hopes.

For several days matters continued in this situation, Mr. Beauclere still exerting his tenderest, but distant assiduities,

duities, to reconcile me to my late affecting loss, when the Incumbent of a living in Lord Bexley's gift, worth three hundred pounds per annum, died suddenly ; which was no sooner known by his Lordship, than he presented it to Mr. Beauclere, who having often declared his opinion, of the impropriety in beneficed clergymen not residing amongst their parishioners, was determined that no such neglect should be chargeable against him, as he resolved on taking possession of his parsonage-house in a very few days, although it was almost two hundred miles distant from Beverley.

When the hour for his departure arrived, and he bid farewell to the family, the dejection of his looks, which Lord Beverley did not fail of imputing to my indifference, affected me exceedingly ;

ingly ; and it was with difficulty, that I could say adieu to him, without betraying a regard, I so much wished to hide: but when he was gone, my tears would not be controuled, and I hurried to my chamber, to hide the emotion of my heart.

Lord Beverley observing, with the most careful attention, every turn of my countenance, after the departure of Mr. Beauclore; and often betraying me into favourable expressions on the merit of his absent Friend, was almost convinced of my real sentiments respecting him, and that I hitherto had acted with deceit by my declarations of indifference: with this idea he hastened to his Mother, and entreated her to oblige him, by endeavouring to find out a secret he wished so much to know.

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Her Ladyship taking the first favourable opportunity, pressed me candidly to confess to her the true situation of my heart, in respect to Mr. Beauclere, promising, that I should have no reason to regret my making her a confidant: without hesitation I complied with her Ladyship's desire, acquainting her with my motives, for having so long dissembled in a point, I was well convinced Lord Beverley wished to know with certainty. My Aunt with infinite tenderness embraced me; and after giving me the highest applause, for the duty and gratitude I had shewn for her and Lord Bexley, by concealing in my own bosom a regard for Mr. Beauclere, she communicated the discovery, with my permission, to her Son; desiring him to convey this intelligence to his Friend,

Friend, whenever he thought proper ; and to recommend his return to Beverley, as soon as was convenient to his affairs.

This summons, you may easily suppose, was soon complied with by Mr. Beauclere, whose transport at such sudden and unexpected success is scarcely to be described ; but as the conversations between lovers are perfectly uninteresting to every one, except themselves, I will not trouble you, Ladies, with a repetition of ours ; contenting myself briefly to inform you, that at the expiration of six months, Lord and Lady Bexley made me the happiest of my sex, by uniting me with the most deserving of mankind ; the amiable Lord Beverley for awhile seeming to forget his own
misfor-

misfortune, in the enjoyment of his Friend's felicity.

In a very short time after our marriage, my Uncle was so good as to remove Mr. Beauclere to a living, at no great distance from Beverly, nearly double the value of his former one, which we found equal to all our wants, as neither he nor I had the smallest turn to extravagance; and in the course of two years after, Heaven was pleased to bless us with that Harriot, who now lies upon the bed of sickness, and a son named William; but in the midst of this enjoyment, we were much alarmed by the precarious situation of Lord Bexley, our generous Benefactor, who having been for some time afflicted with a bilious complaint, had from the opinion of the first physicians, every reason to apprehend,

hend, that the termination of his existence was hastily approaching; and therefore, wishing to see his Son united to some amiable and deserving woman, before his death took place, had it intimated to Lord Beverley, who, ever anxious to oblige so generous and indulgent a Father, at once assented to his wish; leaving to him and Lady Bexley the entire choice of her, whose hand he should receive, being perfectly indifferent to all the sex, as his affections lay entombed with his adored Laura.

My Uncle rejoicing in this acquiescence and indifference, without hesitation fixed on Lady Charlotte Fitzroy, daughter to the Earl of St. Clear, a young Lady of distinguished beauty and high accomplishments, but weak in understanding, and of a temper by far

far too easy to be reckoned perfectly agreeable; from a supposition, that the flexibility of her Ladyship's disposition, when directed by such a husband as Lord Beverley, would soon appear in an advantageous light, and certainly secure him true domestic happiness.

The terms of this contract being soon adjusted, Mr. Beauclere was called up to London, to perform the marriage ceremony; which being over, Lord and Lady Beverley immediately accompanied him to our parsonage house near S——y, where they purposed staying for a fortnight; during which I had sufficient opportunity to investigate every turn in her Ladyship, and with infinite regret soon to perceive, that from a feeble understanding, and an unmeaning easi-

ness of disposition, it was impossible for her to promote the happiness of a man, who possessed so great a share of sensibility, as did the amiable Lord Beverley, even if his heart had not been rivetted on the remembrance of my Sister. His Lordship, however, treated her with the utmost kindness and attention, labouring, to very little purpose, at the improvement of her mind, which she, from the natural sweetness of her temper, attended to as far as she was able.

Lord Bexley having removed to Bath, immediately after the ceremony of his Son's nuptials, in hopes of obtaining some relief to his disorder, was not there ten days, before the symptoms of his immediate dissolution appeared so certain, that an express arrived at the parsonage house from

Lady

Lady Bexley, requiring the attendance, not only of Lord and Lady Beverley, but of me and Mr. Beauclere; when with the utmost expedition we obeyed the summons, but did not arrive at Bath much sooner, than just to receive his Lordship's farewell blessing and good wishes.

The death of so valuable a man could not avoid producing the highest affliction to his family and friends, although it was an event which had long been expected; and it required all the powers of the pious Beauclere to moderate their grief.

As soon as the last sad offices of attention were paid by my Aunt, to her deservedly lamented Lord, she returned with me to the parsonage house near S——y, where she proposed to re-

fide; whilst Mr. Beauclere accompanied Lord and Lady Bexley to London, to assist his Lordship in the arrangement of his affairs; which having finished, he made not the least delay in giving us the pleasure of his company.

Lord Bexley being fond of retirement ever since the death of Laura, soon followed to the country, accompanied by his Lady; and settling himself for the most part at Beverley, enjoyed as much as possible the society of his Mother, and respected Beauclere; proving, in every action, the most unbounded regard and friendship for him and all our family.

I will now, Ladies, with your permission, make a little pause to inquire after my dearest Harriot, who, I sincerely

cerely hope, has felt the refreshing effects of that gentle sleep I left her in; and then I will entreat your farther patience to listen to those misfortunes, which have so forcibly overpowered me."

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L E T T E R XXIV.

MY Harriot is revived according to my hopes; and I feel myself by that means more equal to the task of pursuing the thread of my misfortunes, than I feared would have been the case; as the recollection of them must naturally impress the deepest anguish on my mind.

In the course of two years after Lord Bexley's marriage, he was made happy by the birth of a lovely Son and Daughter, (the latter of whom is that Lady Abberville, who has conducted herself towards your family, Ladies, with such unparalleled indelicacy and unworthiness) which arousing
him

him from a long habituated melancholy, they became the objects of his tenderness and attention ; and as I increased my family in about two years after, by a Daughter named Clarissa, his Lordship invited Mr. Beauclere to have his children educated along with Lord Beverley and Lady Honoria, that the friendship and regard which had so long subsisted between their parents, might descend to them : so flattering an offer, you may be certain, could not be refused, and the children of both families felt equally the effects of his Lordship's benevolence and care.

Six years having glided on in uninterrupted happiness, it was the will of Heaven to deprive us of the most amiable Dowager Countess of Bexley, who died of a putrid fever, leaving her family to deplore a loss, which was sin-

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cerely felt by all her friends and near connections; and as I attended her throughout the whole of her illness, I was seized with the same distemper the day on which she expired; but having at that period of my life a most excellent constitution, I escaped the fatal effects of it, to the inexpressible joy of Mr. Beauclerc, who never quitted my bedside during my dangerous situation.

After this misfortune, our days passed on in an unruffled calm, until Lord Beverley and William Beauclerc had completed their studies at the university, when my boy being strongly prejudiced in favour of the military profession, Lord Bexley procured him an Ensign's commission in a regiment then in Scotland.

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As the time approached for him to join the regiment, Lady Honoria Beverley, now in her fourteenth year, growing extremely sad and pensive (a circumstance quite unusual in her natural disposition), gave great alarm to Lady Bexley, who one day finding her Daughter in tears, asked the cause; to which Lady Honoria at once replied, with a face blushing as a rose, "That William Beauclere was the cause, and she could not tell why; but whenever she thought of his departure, it made her quite unhappy." Lady Bexley, whose penetration was by no means deep, considering this no more than a childish anxiety, on being so soon to lose a sharer in all her playful sports, told her, "That she shewed a great deal of good nature, in being so unwilling to part with her cousin William;" and immediately told Lord Bexley of it.

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But far otherwise did his Lordship view this intelligence, Mr. Beauclere having long before informed him of his suspicions, and strongly recommended a separation of the young ones, as it was impossible to say, what consequences might happen from their being bred up so much together; yet he pretended not to enter into the force of Beauclere's arguments, as he in secret wished to see a connection formed, at a proper time, between his children and ours.

Being satisfied of Lady Honoria's attachment to William, his Lordship wished to be assured, whether it was reciprocal, and taking an opportunity when he was alone with the young foldier, asked him, "if his heart was among the baggage he meant to take to Scotland;" fixing his eye upon him with

with the utmost earnestness as he spoke.

William, by the address and expression in his Lordship's countenance, at once conjecturing, that all his secrets were discovered, took Lord Bexley by the hand, and entreated his forgiveness for an involuntary presumption, assuring his Lordship, "That though he could not resist a love for Lady Honoria Beverley, yet ever conscious of his humble situation in respect to her, and being the Daughter of his friend and benefactor, he had stifled his regard, which should always remain a secret to her Ladyship, who had ever treated him with that good nature only, which might be expected from a young Lady, who had been bred up with him, even from her infancy."

Lord

Lord Bexley, charmed with his generous sentiments, payed William many compliments; and after informing him, that he had reason to be convinced of Lady Honoria's having a greater partiality for him, than his modesty or diffidence would allow him to observe, or if he did, to acknowledge, concluded with an assurance, "That if he persevered in those principles of honour and integrity, which hitherto had been his guide, he certainly should have his permission to be united to her Ladyship, whenever he obtained the rank of a field-officer, which probably would not be a very distant period, unless some very extraordinary incident should intervene."

Such an unexpected mark of approbation from his friend and benefactor, could not avoid calling forth
the

the most grateful expressions from the noble minded William, who hastening to his Father and me, made us participators in his promised happiness.

Lord Bexley, not contented with having contributed so highly to render William the happiest of mankind, was determined, that Lady Honoria, in her turn, should also have reason to rejoice; and sending for her to his library, led her on to answer many questions relative to her Cousin, which tending to confirm what he had long suspected, he desired her to cease her tears, and rest assured, " That as he was convinced, by a conversation he lately had with William Beauclere, of his being as much attached to her, as she could reasonably desire, he should have no objection to their union, as soon as she was of a proper age, and when he had

had attained a rank in life to make it prudent."

In the course of the same day, Mr. Beauclere and I taking an opportunity of Lord Bexley's being alone, began to pour forth the warmest acknowledgements of our hearts, for the uncommon and unmerited honour he had proposed for William; when at once stopping us short, his Lordship said, "If you think yourselves under any obligations to me, you have it in your power to repay them seven fold." To which Mr. Beauclere declaring, what happiness it would ever afford him to oblige Lord Bexley, his Lordship continued, "Could you, Beauclere, consent to part from your Wife, Children, and native country for three years, in order highly to oblige your friend? And could you, Eliza, reconcile it to your-

yourself, to submit with patience to a separation for so long a term, from a Husband with whom you live so truly happy.

Mr. Beauclerc, without hesitation, assuring his Lordship, that he might command his services to any part of the world, whilst my looks, I doubt not, betrayed an anxious, fond reluctance, Lord Bexley, after thanking him, thus proceeded: "My not having promoted you in the Church before this day, must certainly have appeared to you, my dearest Beauclerc, and indeed to all the world, as inconsistent with that friendship, which I have hitherto professed for you and your family, and which, I hope you think sincere. It was always my intention to obtain such an elevation for you, as would render the evening

evening of your life serene and easy ; and you will, I dare say, be not a little surpris'd to hear, that by the birth of my Son, Lord Beverley, your promotion has been suspended. I cannot forget, after what anxious search, my-Father fixed upon a Gentleman to attend me on my travels, whose extensive learning and knowledge of mankind, could only be equalled by his virtues. Having so powerfully experienced the good effects of such a prudent choice myself, it must cease to be a wonder, when I became a Father, that my paternal feelings inspired me with an idea of suffering you to continue without that promotion, which you so highly merit, until after Beverley's return from his travels, as it would have been impossible for me to ask a Dean or Bishop, to accompany him on his intended tour. I trust my
Beauclere

Beauclere and Eliza will pardon me for so tedious a delay to their expectations, and attribute it to the anxious solicitude of a Parent, whose principal happiness in this world is centered in the welfare of an only and deserving Son. I can easily suppose the bitter pangs, which your being so long parted from each other will occasion; but I will a little soften the rigour of them, by making a tour with Eliza to see you, twice at least whilst you continue on the Continent. When you return with your charge, the obligations I then shall owe my friend can never be sufficiently repaid."

Had not his Lordship promised to let me see my Husband, during his residence on the Continent, I fear my resolution would have failed, when I heard him promise to attend Lord Beverley;

Beverley; which, however, I bore, without betraying any great emotion, as the advantage of our children was so materially concerned in the issue of the event.

Matters being arranged with the utmost expedition for the departure of Lord Beverley and his tutor, the dreadful hour for separation too soon arrived, when on giving a farewell embrace to my dearest Beauclere, I for ever took my leave of happiness. On the same day also my son William left us to join his regiment, having first obtained permission from Lord Bexley, to write to Lady Honoria.

Lord Bexley being desirous of making my situation, as agreeable as possible, during Mr. Beauclere's absence, insisted on my residing at Beverley, with
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my Daughters, until he returned ; and as we every week received letters, either from him or Lord Beverley, I endeavoured to reconcile myself with composure to this unpleasing separation ; indulging the hope of that period soon approaching, when we were to pay our promised visit to the travellers.

It did at last arrive, when preparations were made, and the day fixed for Lord and Lady Bexley, Lady Honoria, with me and my two Daughters, to set off from London to Geneva, where Lord Beverley and Mr. Beauclerc were waiting to receive us ; and as his Lordship wished to give his friend on their meeting, a striking instance of the sense he held his conduct in, he had obtained for him the Deanery of D——, of which he meant himself to give the first intelligence—when—my
good

good and gracious God support me, whilst I repeat a misfortune, which must for ever remain engraven on my heart—an express arrived with the dreadful information, that the amiable Lord Beverley and my adored Husband were alas ! no more ; his Lordship, who was remarkably fond of fishing, having by some accident fallen out of a boat, into the Lake of Geneva ; and the generous Beauclere plunging in to save him, they both, after repeated struggles, and every effort to preserve them, were irrecoverably lost ; nor were their bodies found until the ensuing day.

It is unnecessary for me to say, with what excess of grief this dreadful news was received by me and my children, our situation being much easier imagined

gined than described: Lord Bexley also, was an object of the highest pity, having lost an only Son, whose virtues and good qualities entitled him with justice, to the most affectionate regard a parent could bestow; and with him a sincere and valuable friend, whose life had fallen a sacrifice to a generous attachment for his family, leaving a widow and three orphans to deplore his fate; as to Lady Bexley, her affliction soon ceased to be severe, it being impossible for any thing to affect her sensibility to a high degree; and the idea of that acquisition of wealth and consequence, which Lady Honoria must enjoy by the death of her Brother, readily induced her to submit with resignation to the decrees of Providence.

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The distress and anguish of my mind was not a little increased, by the constant lamentations of my Harriot and Clarissa for their Father, on whom they doated with true affection; and more particularly so, when I for an instant reflected, that by this heavy stroke, we were at once deprived of every worldly support to be called a certainty; my Husband's income, which was entirely in the church, dying with him, without having secured the smallest provision for his family:—This, I must confess, was rather an unpardonable omission in us both, but the firm reliance we entertained of our Patron's promise, to provide for Mr. Beauclere, to the utmost of his wish, had been the cause of our postponing a measure of such prudence, without considering the uncertainty of human life.

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It is true, I had every thing to expect from the bounty of my generous Relation, but the idea of being for ever a dependant on his benevolence, was often painful to my feelings: his Lordship did not, however, long permit me to continue under such torturing reflections, as he was no sooner able to rouse up a sufficient share of fortitude, to enter on so delicate a subject, than he addressed me in the most affectionate, pathetic terms, on the heavy loss we had both sustained, desiring me, "To look on him in future, as a father to my children; and to consider his house my home at all times; but particularly so, until he had settled a certain provision on me for life, equal to the love and regard he entertained for his ever to be lamented Beauclere."

In a short time after this melancholy event took place, his Lordship with his family removed to Beverley, and as my girls and I were now a part of it, we accompanied him, to enjoy in solitude, that poignant grief, with which we were so heavily oppressed: we were not long however settled in this retirement, when another weight of misery threatened the unhappy Widow and her Orphans, Lord Bexley having so much impaired his constitution, by indulging that affliction, which in secret preyed upon his mind, he was reduced to a most alarming situation, before his danger was suspected.

His Lordship's anxiety to return to town was very great, for the purpose of executing the settlement he wished to
make

make on me and my two girls, who now only wanted a provision; as he had but a few weeks before purchased a company for William, which, with his future prospect of Lady Honoria, he considered full sufficient for his establishment in life; and indeed with justice might he think so.

However, as I could not give up the idea, that the country air and exercise would be of service, and that by the exertions of his friends, the anguish of his mind might be removed, and thereby his health restored, I prevailed upon his Lordship to postpone his journey for a little time; when the effects of my advice became so flattering, that to all appearance he was getting better, even in the opinion of his Physician: but this was, alas! a mere delusive-calm, as a very

few days after terminated his existence.

An hour before his dissolution, he called for Lady Honoria to his bedside, and after giving her some particular advice for her future conduct, he recommended it to her, as his last request and commands, “ That the instant she came of age, she should make a handsome provision for Mrs. Beauclere and her Daughters; and until that period arrived, that she should never let them feel the want of it:— “ As to your marriage with William Beauclere,” concluded his Lordship, “ it is, I suppose, unnecessary for me to urge any thing on that subject, as your own inclinations will no doubt induce you to accomplish a point, which has so long taken possession of your
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your heart, he being in every respect deserving of your attention.

To all which her Ladyship promised the most implicit observance; yet from some secret impulse, I never could account for, it struck upon my mind, that from the instant of Lord Bexley's death, my children and I were nearly destitute: this consideration was, however, absorbed in the affliction I endured, for the loss of the early companion of my infant days; the sincere and steady lover of poor Laura; and the determined friend and patron of my Beauclerc:—To have known Lord Bexley, and not have loved him for his distinguished virtues, was impossible; which the lamentations of the neighbouring gentry, his tenants, and the surrounding poor assembled at his fu-

neral, most evidently proved ;—for, indeed, it might be truly said of him,

Distress had always shelter at his door ;

The Widow's heart by him was free'd from pain ;

His bounteous purse supply'd the honest Poor ;

Nor did the Orphan lift his hands in vain.

Soon after the interment of my worthy Benefactor, the Dowager (whose grief was not very violent, except for a few days), with her family and mine set out for London, where Lady Honoria Beverley met her Guardian, the Earl of St. Clear ; when she found herself in possession of no less a fortune, than eight thousand pounds per annum, besides thirty thousand pounds in cash ; the remainder of the late Earl's estate (after paying a jointure of five thousand annually to the Dowager) with the title, going to a distant relation of the family.

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As the Dowager was now totally governed by her Daughter, she readily acquiesced in an application made by Lady Honoria to her Guardian, for leave to reside upon the Continent, a few years, for the advantage of her education, to which he made no objection; and as neither I, or my poor girls, had now, alas! a choice to offer, or even were consulted in our wishes, it was determined we should accompany them;—a circumstance by no means pleasing, it not being a difficult matter to perceive, that Lady Honoria was totally changed in disposition, since her Brother's death, being no longer the affable, sweet tempered girl who won my William's heart, and engaged the warm friendship of his Sisters;—so sudden and unexpected an aggrandisement was evidently too

powerful for her mind to bear with moderation, and broke out on many occasions before her Father's death; but after that heavy misfortune, her capricious haughtiness became intolerable, her Ladyship often treating my Harriot and Clárisa with impertinence, and me with disrespect; so that in this new modelled relation, I plainly perceived some inauspicious omens for the future prospects of the unsuspecting William; but not wishing to anticipate evils, I concealed my apprehensions from all my children.

As our intended tour to the Continent was in general known, Sir Charles Loftus, who had long admired my Harriot, waited upon me, to obtain permission to address her:—You may easily suppose, Ladies, that in
my

my dependant situation, such a proposal was received with the highest pleasure; not in the least doubting, as he was a most amiable and handsome young man, with a very fine estate, that she would readily accept of him.

But how great was my astonishment and disappointment, when, on mentioning it to her, she fell upon her knees, and dissolving into tears, told me, "She had been married above a year to Mr. Dison, her Father's curate near S——y:—that fear had deterred her from confessing it to her Father, before he went abroad; and that she had often since resolved to entrust me with the secret, but was always prevented by some idle cause, until the distresses of the family became so numerous, it was impossible, without hazarding the

chance of adding more to my affliction, by such a piece of information: that nothing could have induced her to adopt so clandestine a step, but the certainty of Mr. Dison never being able to obtain the consent of Lord Bexley or her Father; and that had he asked and been refused, they never could have hoped for pardon, if afterwards they presumed to marry."

She earnestly entreated my forgiveness, assuring me, " That neither William or Clarissa were acquainted with the connexion she had formed, or her having any particular attachment to Mr. Dison, as she did not wish to draw upon them the least displeasure, by being concerned in so secret a transaction."

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Although this intelligence at once destroyed all the ambitious hopes, with which my heart was filled, for the establishment of this beloved girl, I could not withhold from her the pardon, she so earnestly supplicated: I had myself married an amiable young man, merely from a motive of love, and could not well condemn my child for feeling the same influence: Mr. Difon was to be sure only a curate, but a man of learning, merit, and of a good family; and had always been distinguished by my Beauclerc with sincere regard:—so much so indeed, that I have often heard him declare an intention to promote him, whenever fortune put it in his power.

The approbation and friendship of so good a man, was a sufficient test of

Mr. Dison's worth ; and although Harriot could not hope for affluence with such a husband, yet she might still be happy ; I therefore informed Sir Charles Loftus with what had happened, and ordered her to summon Mr. Dison up to London ; when I freely gave her to him, with my blessing, which was all the dower the wretched widow could bestow, the Dowager presenting her on this occasion two hundred guineas, to purchase cloaths and household furniture ; but as to Lady Honoria, she took but little notice of this constant companion from her infant days, forgetting every tie of nature and affection, in the contemptuous insignificance of the humble curate's wife : Harriot, however, did not long continue at the Dowager's, to feel the mortification of her Cousin's illiberality,

illiberality, but retired with her husband to his curacy near S——y.

William, who was with his regiment, could not get leave of absence, in order to see his friends before they took their departure for the Continent; and therefore wrote to Lady Honoria and me in the most expressive terms, at the mortification it was to him, to be deprived of the happiness he had proposed: but, would you believe it, my good Ladies, after running her eye over his letter in a careless manner, she, with an air of the most perfect indifference, threw it into the fire.

What my feelings must have been, on perceiving so palpable a slight thrown upon my boy, you may easily conceive: It even did not escape the observation

observation of Clarissa, although but in her fourteenth year, as she possessed an uncommon share of sensibility, and loved her Brother with the tenderest affection:—In this act of Lady Honoria's, she at once foresaw the fate of William, and, bursting into tears, hastily retired from the room, to hide the emotions of her heart.

Although I, from many other circumstances, had reason to suspect, that William Beauclere was beginning to decline in the favourable opinion of her Ladyship, yet I forbore to give him the smallest hint of it in any of my letters, being induced to impute her appearance of indifference, merely to the affects of absence, and having her mind just then dazzled with the unexpected acquisition of so large a fortune;

fortune ; all which the fond infatuation of a partial mother vainly flattered me, would soon be overturned, when she again saw my amiable, deserving Son, no doubt with many advantages of improvement, received in the course of near a year, in that best of schools for polishing the manners, —the army.

We now bid adieu to England for some time, with a numerous retinue of attendants, and arrived at Paris, where we remained only a few days, and then proceeded to Rome, which was to be the place of our residence for some months, as Lady Honoria intended in that city to improve herself very highly, both in music, painting, and Italian ; and as the Dowager Lady Bexley was Godmother to my Clarissa,

rissa, she thought proper to have her instructed by the same masters who attended her Daughter.

But poor Clarissa, too soon discovering a genius superior to Lady Honoria's; and the different masters often complimenting her on the rapidity of her improvement, she was ere long regarded by her Ladyship as a rival; and in consequence of it dismissed from receiving any farther instructions, by the Dowager's order, recommended by Lady Honoria, under the pretence, "That upon reflection, such distinguished accomplishments were quite unnecessary for Miss Clarissa Beauclere, whose situation in life might most probably be the same, as that of her Sister Harriot." This determination was however received by my
poor

poor girl, with a most surprising degree of fortitude and temper, notwithstanding her passion for the arts, and that she so sensibly felt the loss of being deprived of such an opportunity for instruction.

We spent about a year at Rome, during which, in spite of Lady Honoria's malevolence, Clarissa acquired a tolerable knowledge in those accomplishments she had begun to learn, merely through the generous feelings of the teachers, who plainly seeing through her Ladyship's design, contrived to steal instructions to her.

Leaving Rome, we employed six months in visiting other parts of Italy ; and then returned to Paris, where the Dowager took a house, and lived
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in the highest style of magnificence, entertaining a constant round of the most gay and fashionable characters, when Lady Honoria received all that homage and adulation expected from her vanity; nor did Clarissa, without appearing to desire it, pass through the crowd without her share of admiration, which Lady Honoria no sooner perceived, than she prevailed on the Dowager, to prohibit her from the pleasure of society, framing, as an excuse for this capricious whim, "That it surely would be a disadvantage to Miss Clarissa, to be introduced so early into public; besides, giving her a taste for company entirely out of her walk in life."—This was a mortification which by no means surprised me, and only confirmed the melancholy reflection I had often indulged, since
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the death of my adored Beauclere, (but particularly since that of the amiable Lord Bexley) that I and my orphan children should be despised and miserable dependants.

Before we were a month settled in Paris, Lady Honoria had such influence over the Dowager, as to persuade her to dismiss all the servants, who had faithfully spent their youth in the service of her ancestors, and send them back to England, with a very scanty allowance, to seek for bread in the autumn of their days; supplying their places with a swarm of foreigners.

All my letters now received from William being filled with heavy complaints of the coolness of Lady Honoria's style of writing, and his hear-
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ing but very seldom from her, I was revolving in my mind, whether I ought not to inform him of my suspicions relative to her Ladyship, when I was agreeably surpris'd by his appearance in Paris, as he could no longer bear the doubts with which his mind was tortured.

His uncommon elegance of manners and address (as I had imagined would be the case) instantly touched the heart of Lady Honoria on his first appearance, reviving every tender, generous sentiment in his favour, which her unbounded pride and vanity, however, too soon extinguished, when she began to treat him in a trifling manner, and at length with evident contempt; but William Beauclere, who possessed a greatness of soul which accorded

accorded with his profession, disdaining to wear the chains of any woman who used him ill, no sooner was convinced of the unmerited alteration in her sentiments relative to him, than he spurned her with indignation from his heart, where she had long remained unrivalled; and returned to Scotland, from whence he soon after went with his regiment to the East Indies.

Here Mrs. Beauclere's sensations being too powerful, stopped her utterance; and as her auditors could not resist a sympathizing tear of pity for Captain Beauclere's disappointment, we intreated of her not to hurry herself in the conclusion of her history; however, after pausing some minutes, she proceeded.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

